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This study analyzes the use of Facebook sites by 85 American Bar Association accredited universities in order to answer questions relating to the frequency and nature of the sections offered on law library Facebook sites. Questions relating to the offering of mobile technology information on law library Facebook sites and the use of custom designed third party applications on law library Facebook sites are also answered.

Standard Facebook sections were found to be very common on the sites reviewed, with the exception of the Events and the Discussions section. By contrast, information about mobile technology was found to be relatively uncommon, and when present, was primarily focused on iOS development. Law library Facebook sites that utilized third party applications were also found to be relatively scarce.

Headings:

Law libraries and collections

Studies/Facebook (Web site)

Law Libraries and Facebook: A Content Analysis Approach

by  
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**Introduction:**

Over the past few years, Facebook has seen broad acceptance among students as a means of online communication (Stutzman, 2007, p. 3). Academic librarians, recognizing this trend, have increasingly turned to utilizing Facebook to interact directly with students through a site sponsored by the library. Recent research on academic libraries has found that students have benefited from the convenience and accessibility offered by library sponsored Facebook sites. In 2007, Mack et al found that the majority of reference questions during a semester at Penn State were submitted to a librarian through Facebook, rather than through e-mail, instant messenger, or in-person reference (Mack et al, 2007, p. 5).

One area that has remained relatively unexplored in the research literature is the use and role of Facebook in a law library setting. Although fewer in number than traditional academic libraries, law libraries serve a crucial role by providing access to legal information to students and the public. Unlike other academic libraries, which retain a broad and general collection of materials, law libraries focus on providing a specific selection of legal-related information (American Bar Association). Law libraries also differ from academic libraries with regard to the general characteristics of patrons. Academic libraries typically serve undergraduate and graduate students from a variety of disciplines, while law libraries primarily serve legal students, lawyers, and members of the general public.

Why is it important to explore the use of Facebook by law libraries? Recent literature has suggested that law students are significant users of Facebook and are interested in seeing

it used in the law school environment. A survey of the incoming 2010 law students at the University of Victoria Law School found that 91% of students use Facebook and 80% of those students would be interested in seeing law school events and activities published on Facebook, in addition to being published on the faculty calendar of events. Despite this student interest, many law libraries do not currently operate a Facebook site. By failing to recognize social media trends, law libraries run the risk of falling behind their academic counterparts in providing an excellent level of service to the student community.

This research paper will explore the use and role of Facebook among law libraries through the following research questions:

- 1) To what extent are Facebook pages used by law libraries?
- 2) To what extent does law student demand exist for law library Facebook page?
- 3) For the law libraries which do offer Facebook pages, what kind of features and applications are typically offered?
- 4) How can a Facebook page be best utilized to incorporate mobile technology into a law library's service offerings?
- 5) For offering services on a law library Facebook page, is it better to rely on the built-in Facebook capabilities or to incorporate custom designed applications?

### **Literature Review:**

Although Facebook was launched in 2004, the earliest research articles about the use of Facebook in academic libraries did not appear until 2006. By 2006, Facebook had already

seen wide adoption by students. In 2005, Facebook was estimated to have approximately 6 million users from 2027 colleges (Lashinsky, 2005, p. 40). Early research on the use of Facebook in academic libraries primarily focused on introducing Facebook to a librarian audience and explaining why it was important. Matthews (2006) reviewed the features offered by Facebook and explored the use of a Facebook group for the Georgia Tech library as a way for librarians to network with students (Matthews, p.306). Matthews suggested that academic libraries could adopt online social networks to increase campus visibility and to help students understand what the purpose of the library is (p.307).

In 2007, Mack et al investigated how students at Pennsylvania State University submitted reference and research questions to an academic librarian over the course of a semester. Mack et al found that reference and research questions submitted through Facebook consisted of 126 out of the 441 questions received by the librarian over the course of a semester. Facebook was the single largest source of questions received by the librarian, with in-person questions coming in second at 112 out of the 441 questions received.

Recent research has also investigated the possibility of using social networking sites to increase awareness of upcoming library events. Kwong (2007) reported on the use of Facebook and MySpace, both social media sites, to advertise upcoming library events at Indiana University South Bend's Schurz Library. Kwong partially attributed the much greater success of the 2007 Schurz Library Speaker Series, in comparison with the previous year's speaker, to the awareness generated by the use of the social sites (p. 57). Although Facebook advertising for library events is cheap and easily implemented, the

effectiveness of the advertising may be difficult to measure (Greenwell & Kraemer, 2007, p. 13).

Multiple research articles have explored developing applications for Facebook in the context of an academic library environment. Breeding (2007) investigated the possibility for academic library applications offered by the Facebook development platform. The Facebook development platform is a set of tools which can be used by developers to create outside applications that interact with the Facebook environment (Facebook.com). Breeding recognized the Facebook development platform as one which presented an opportunity for libraries to integrate existing services and applications into a social network environment (2007, p.30). Ganster & Schumacher (2009) detailed the integration of third party applications into an academic library Facebook site. One example Ganster and Schumacher identified was a JSTOR (short for Journal Storage) application which allowed for the searching of JSTOR resources through the library's Facebook page (p. 116).

In the context of a law library environment, Behrens (2007) explored the justifications for creating a law library Facebook site from the perspective of law library administrators. Behrens identified a significant presence of law students on Facebook, as indicated by the willingness of 70% of the Duke Law School 1<sup>st</sup> Year students to join a Facebook group. In addition, she cites a particular benefit of Facebook as being that in contrast to other social network sites which were popular at the time, such as Second Life, users on Facebook were more likely to use their real names and identities, on account of Facebook's policy of deleting fake pages.

**Methodology:**

Research was conducted for this study using the technique of content analysis. Earl Babbie (2009) in *The Practice of Social Research* defines content analysis as, “the study of recorded human communications, such as books, websites, paintings and laws.” Steve Stemler (2001) in *An Overview of Content Analysis* notes that content analysis enables researchers to sift through large volumes of data in an orderly and systematic fashion. In order to do so, Krippendorff (2004) identifies six questions that must be addressed in every content analysis:

- 1) Which data are analyzed?
- 2) How are they defined?
- 3) What is the population from which they are drawn?
- 4) What is the context relative to which the data are analyzed?
- 5) What are the boundaries of the analysis?
- 6) What is the target of the inferences?

Through analyzing samples of recorded materials, conclusions and inferences are drawn which can be generalized to the population as a whole.



**Population Selection:**

For this study, the population of interest was defined as Facebook pages from academic law libraries associated with universities fully accredited by the American Bar Association (ABA). As of 2011, the ABA has accredited a total of 200 institutions. Of these 200 institutions, five are provisionally approved. As part of the accreditation process, a law library must provide the appropriate range and depth of instructional, reference, and other bibliographic services to meet the needs of the law school's teaching, scholarship, service, and research programs, as specified in the ABA standards. By selecting this population, I was interested in ensuring that the Facebook pages analyzed for the study came from law libraries which were of sufficient depth and scope as to be representative of a typical academic law library.

In order to find which of the ABA-accredited institutions offered a Facebook site, I visited the law library websites of the 200 ABA-accredited universities. On these websites, I checked to see if the law library offered a link to a corresponding law library Facebook page. To account for the possibility of a law library Facebook page existing but not being referenced on the law library's website, I also used Google searches to search for the presence of a law library Facebook page. Keyword terms included the law library's name and the word "Facebook". I also performed searches on Facebook for a particular law library if either of the two previous search methods failed to retrieve a result. Keyword search terms on Facebook included the law library's name and the geographical location of the school.

From these sources, I compiled a sample size of 85 ABA-accredited law libraries which offered Facebook pages.

### **Data Collection Procedure and Timeframe:**

Data collection for this study began on January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2011, and was completed on March 30, 2011. For each of the law library Facebook sites included in the population, I paid a visit to the site and recorded selected information based off two templates which I constructed. The templates can be found in Appendix A and B. Data collection consisted of taking notes in a Word document and recording associated screenshots of the law library's Facebook page, where appropriate. Screenshots were used for Facebook pages which contained large numbers of entries on the Wall section, in addition for being used to record the presence of selected sections, as indicated in Appendix B.

### **Data Analysis Procedure:**

Upon completing the data collection process, the following data analysis procedures were performed:

The content of the Wall posts from the Facebook sites was compared and categorized in order to identify repeating patterns and common themes. When information about mobile technology was present on the Wall, the type of information and the services provided was contrasted with the pages which lacked such information and services.

For third party Facebook applications and custom video content, particular attention was paid to analyzing the effectiveness and the usage of the third party applications and the custom video content. Such methods included documenting the frequency of user views

of the custom video content, and comparing the options present on a Facebook based catalog search tool versus the webpage based catalog search.

### **Validity and reliability of methodology:**

The population for this study consisted of Facebook pages from academic law libraries associated with universities fully accredited by the ABA. As part of the ABA requirements, each of the libraries must adhere to minimum standards of service, which include providing the appropriate range and depth of reference, instructional, bibliographic, and other services to meet the needs of the law school's teaching, scholarship, research, and service programs (Americanbar.org.). In addition, standard 601(c) of the ABA requirements states that a law library shall keep abreast of contemporary technology and adopt in when appropriate. By selecting this population, the ABA requirements ensure that examples from individual members of the population can be used to provide commentary on the population as a whole.

When performing research for this study, data was recorded over a period of three months. A potential issue with reliability was identified, in that information on Facebook sites can be changed or deleted. Although much of the information reviewed did remain the same from the beginning of the study to the conclusion, there was one example of a law library which did remove features from a Facebook site. The Harvard Law Library, which had operated a full featured Facebook site during the month of January, 2011 no longer operated an official Facebook site as of March, 2011.

**Results:****Number of ABA-accredited Law Library Facebook sites:**

During the data collection process, 85 law library Facebook sites from ABA accredited institutions were found. As of March 2011, the ABA has accredited 200 institutions, of which five of these institutions are provisionally approved. Of the 195 fully accredited institutions, approximately 44% offer a law library Facebook site. This figure indicates that a significant number of institutions have chosen to offer a Facebook site, but the majority has not yet done so.

The past four years have seen significant growth in the number law library Facebook sites. In 2007, fewer than 10 law libraries experimented with offering a Facebook site (Behrens, 2007). As a means of comparison, in February, 2006 the ABA had only fully accredited 188 institutions. Percentage wise, this represented fewer than 6% of the ABA accredited institutions at that time. These findings are displayed in the table on the following page.

**Table 1: Facebook Sites from ABA Accredited Institutions**

Number of ABA Accredited Law Schools: 2006	Number of ABA Accredited Law Schools: 2011	Number of Law Library Facebook Sites: 2006	Number of Law Library Facebook Sites: 2011	Law library Facebook Sites as Percentage of Law Schools: 2006	Law library Facebook Sites as Percentage of Law Schools: 2011
188	195	< 10	85	<6%	44%

### **Popularity of Law Library Facebook Sites:**

On Facebook, the popularity of a given site can be seen in the number of ‘likes’ that it receives. In the context of law libraries and Facebook, students can show support for the presence of a law library’s Facebook page by liking it. This is accomplished by clicking a ‘Like’ button on the Facebook site. By ‘liking’ an item, a user can share content with friends on Facebook. After ‘liking’ an item, a story appears in the student’s friends’ News Feed with a link back to the ‘liked’ item.

Among the law library Facebook sites reviewed, the average number of ‘likes’ for a law library Facebook site was approximately 162. The median number of ‘likes’ was 141.

For the ABA-accredited law schools, the average student enrollment was approximately 258 students (American Bar Association). As a percentage of the average student enrollment, 162 ‘likes’ would represent approximately 63%, while the median number of ‘likes’ would represent approximately 55% of the average student enrollment. These results can be seen in the following table:

**Table 2: Average and Median ABA Accredited Law School Student Enrollment and Number of ‘Likes’**

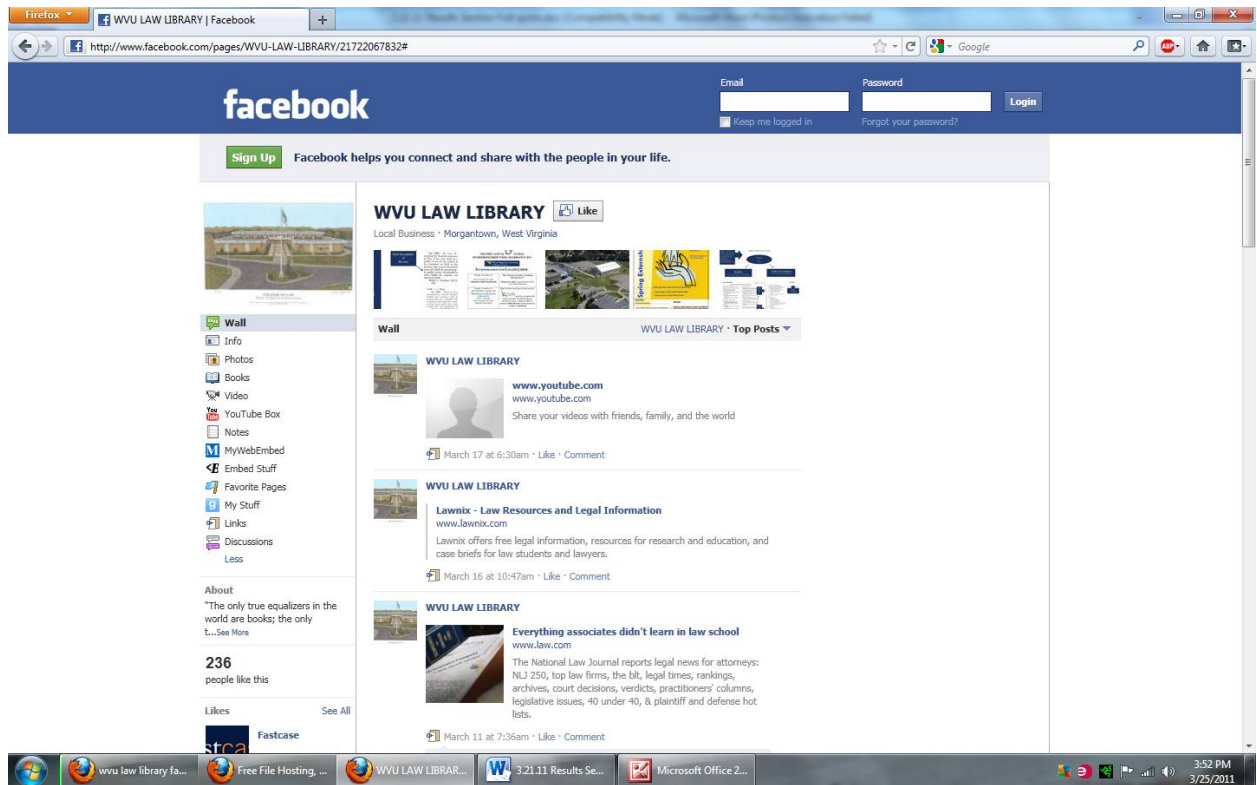
Average Student Enrollment	Average Number of ‘Likes’	Median Number of ‘Likes’	Average number of ‘Likes’ as Percentage of Student Population	Median number of ‘Likes’ as Percentage of Student Population
258.23	162.2471	141	62.79%	54.65%

### **Facebook Features:**

Although many different variations of structure existed among the law library Facebook sites reviewed, common Facebook features were found to be present on many of the sites.

An example of a typical law library Facebook site can be found in the following screenshot from West Virginia University Law Library.

## Screen 1: West Virginia University Law Library



Standard Facebook features that were found on multiple law library Facebook sites included the following sections:

### 1) Wall:

The Wall section is the initial page that visitors to a Facebook site see. This section contains news postings and comments, and was present on all of the reviewed law library Facebook sites. An example of a Wall section can be seen in the screenshot on the following page from the Rodino Law Library Facebook site.

## Screen 2: Rodino Law Library Wall Section

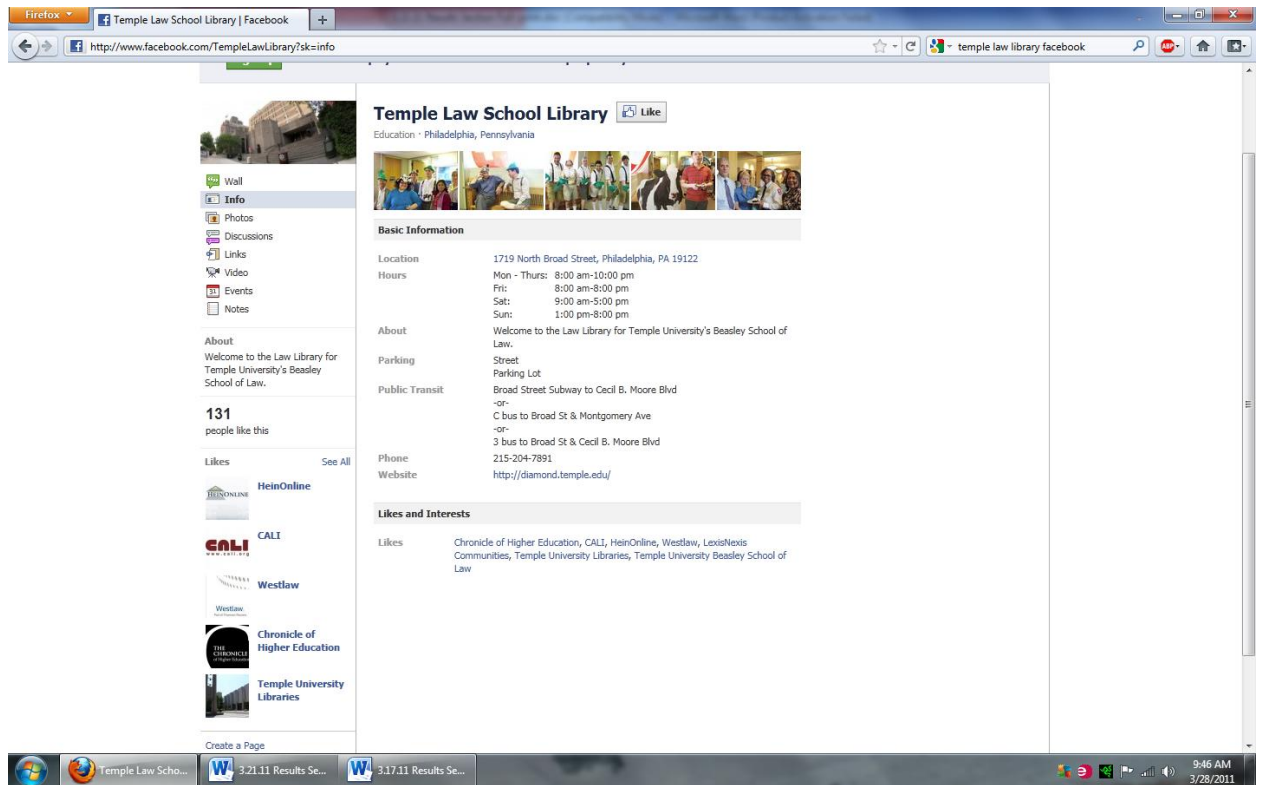


### 2) Info:

The Info section was typically used for displaying information about the law library, such as hours of operation and contact details. The Info section was present on all of the reviewed law library Facebook sites. An example of an Info section can be found in the screenshot on the following page from the Temple Law Library Facebook site.



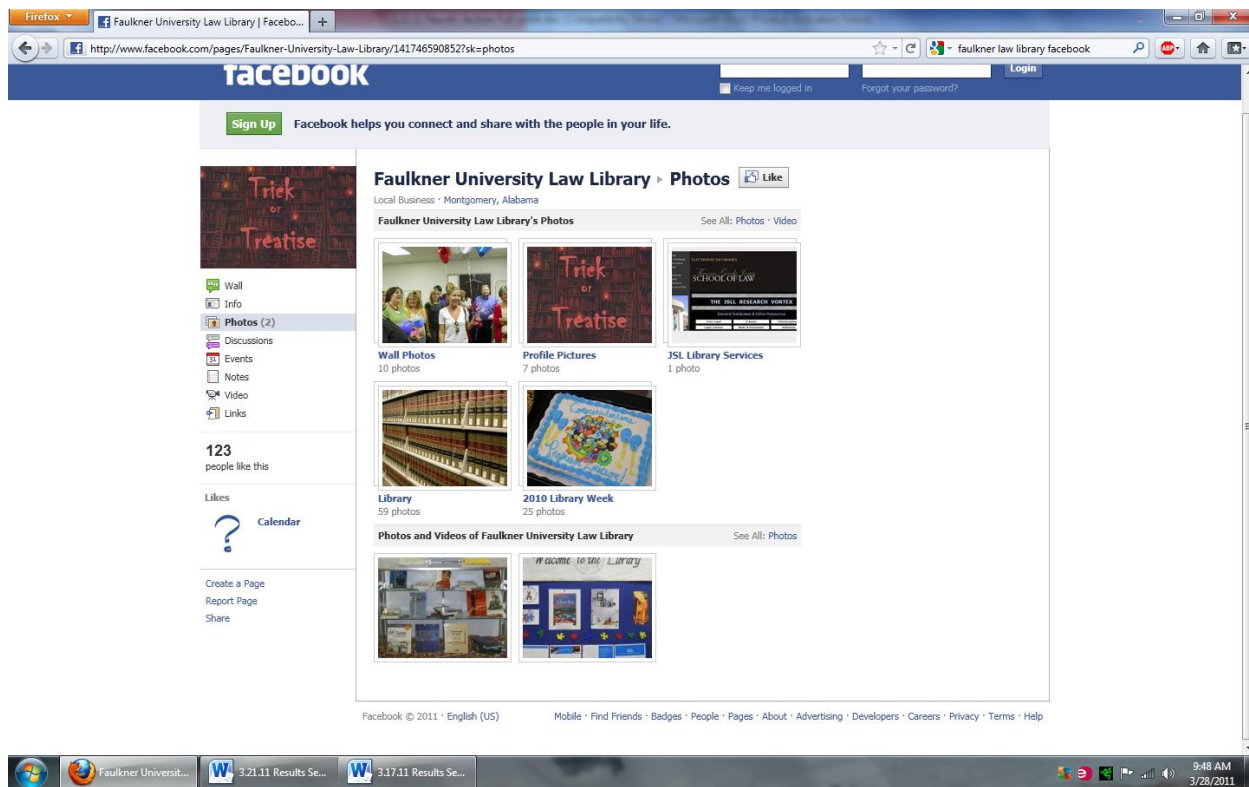
### Screen 3: Temple Law School Library Info Section



#### 3) Photos:

The Photos section was used as a place to store and classify photos which may be of interest to visitors. An example of the Photos section can be seen in the screenshot on the following page from the Faulkner University Law Library Facebook site.

## Screen 4: Faulkner University Law Library Photos Section



The Photos section was present on 75 of the sites reviewed, and absent from 10, as can be seen in the table on the following page.

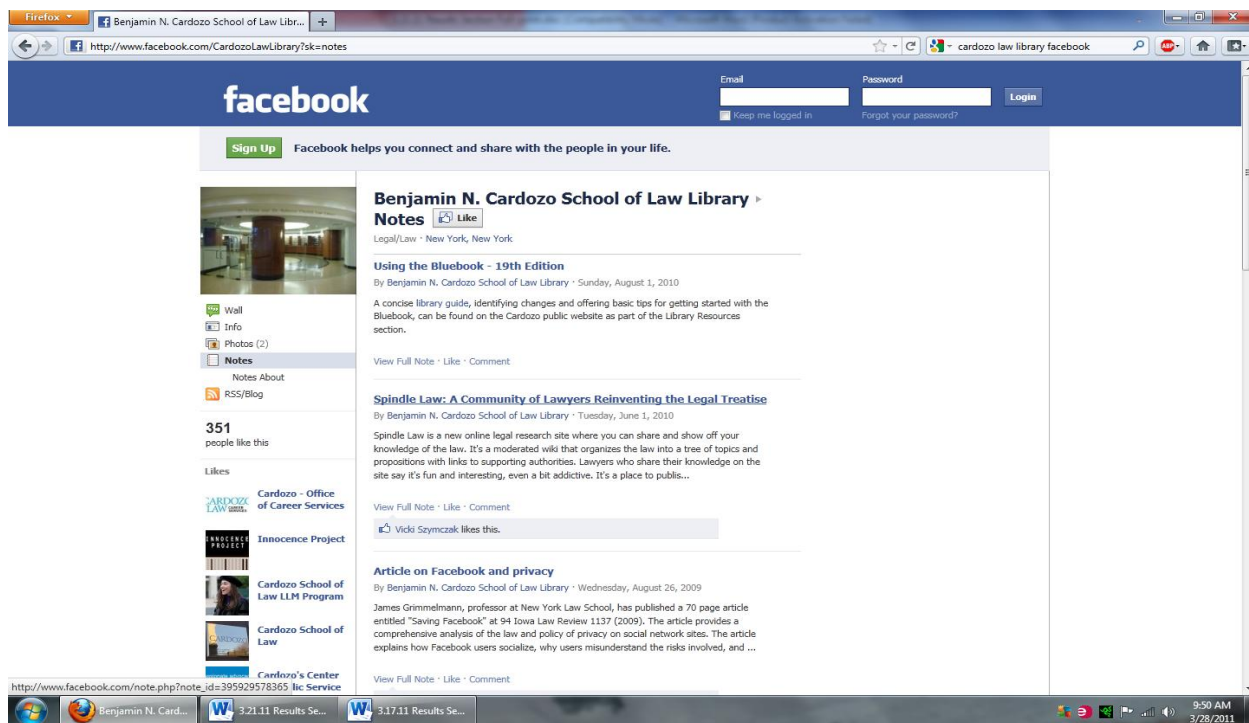
**Table 3: Photos Section**

Number of Law Library Facebook Sites with Photos Section	Number of Law Library Facebook Sites without Photos Section	Percentage of Law Library Facebook Sites with Photos Section	Percentage of Law Library Facebook Sites without Photos Section
75	10	88.23%	11.77%

## 4) Notes:

The notes section was used for incorporating content from an external source (i.e, an RSS feed or a blog), or from another section within the Facebook site. An example of a Notes section can be seen in the screenshot on the following page from the Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law Library Facebook site.

## Screen 5: Benjamin N Cardozo School of Law Library Notes Section



The Notes section was present on 29 of the sites reviewed, and absent from 56, as can be seen in the table on the following page.

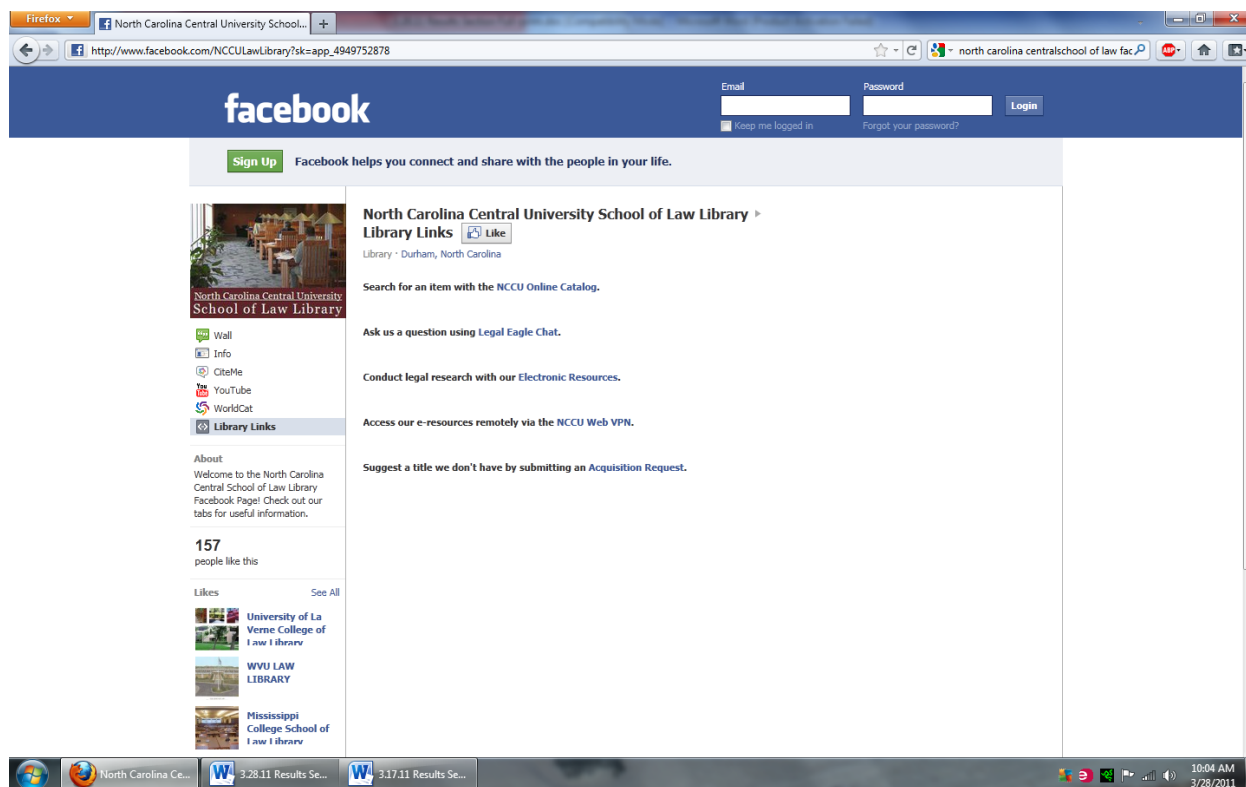
**Table 4: Notes Section**

Number of Law Library Facebook Sites with Notes Section	Number of Law Library Facebook Sites without Notes Section	Percentage of Law Library Facebook Sites with Notes Section	Percentage of Law Library Facebook Sites without Notes Section
29	56	34.11%	65.88%

### 5) Links

The Links section was used to provide hyperlinks to other sites which may be of interest to law students. An example of a Links section can be found in the screenshot on the following page from the North Carolina Central Law Library Facebook site:

## Screen 6: North Carolina Central Law Library Links Section



The Links section was present in 23 of the sites reviewed, and absent from 62, as can be seen in the table on the following page:

**Table 5: Links Section**

Number of Law Library Facebook Sites with Links Section	Number of Law Library Facebook Sites without Links Section	Percentage of Law Library Facebook Sites with Links Section	Percentage of Law Library Facebook Sites without Links Section
23	62	27.05%	72.94%

#### 6) Discussions

The Discussions section was used to list questions which were intended to solicit responses from visitors. An example of a Discussions section can be found in the screenshot from the Pace Law Library Facebook site on the following page.

## Screen 7: Pace Law Library Discussions Section



The Discussions Section was present in 30 of the sites reviewed and absent from 55.

These results can be seen in the table on the following page.



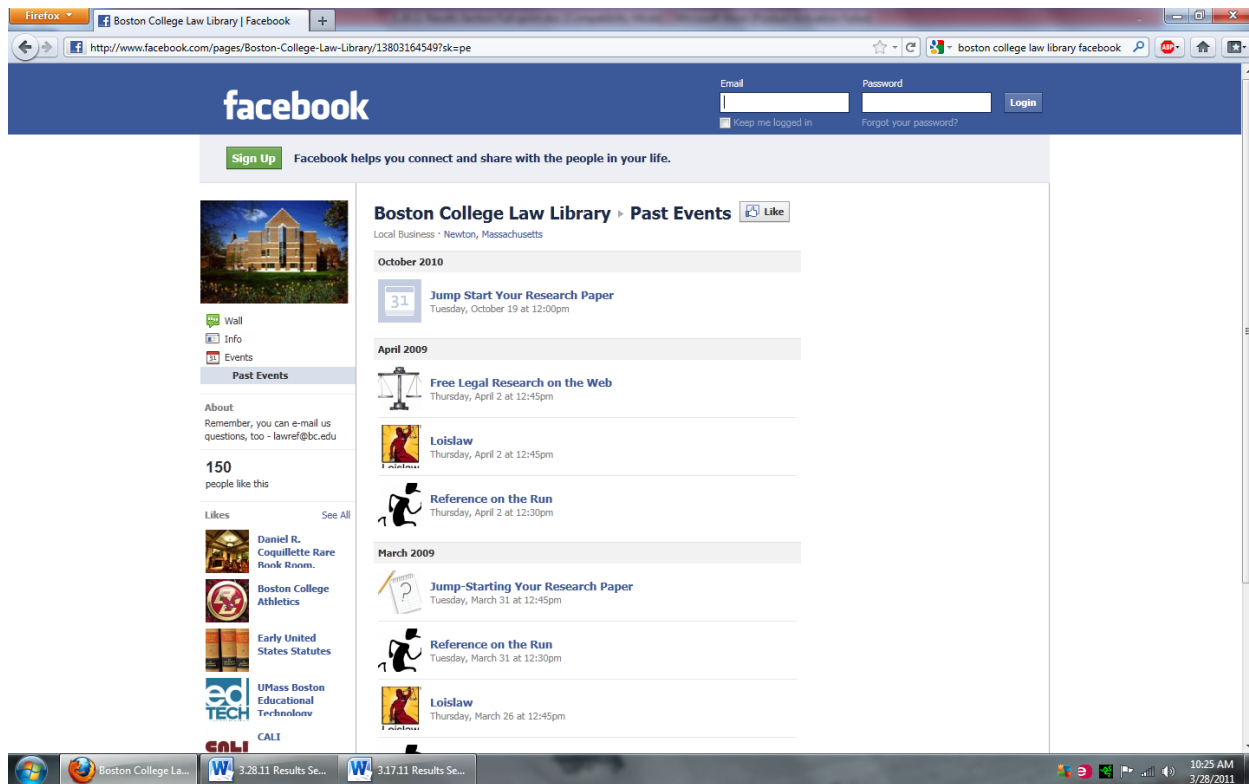
**Table 6: Discussions Section**

Number of Law Library Facebook Sites with Discussions Section	Number of Law Library Facebook Sites without Discussions Section	Percentage of Law Library Facebook Sites with Discussions Section	Percentage of Law Library Facebook Sites without Discussions Section
30	55	35.29%	64.71%

#### 7) Events:

The Events section was used to display upcoming and past events which may be of interest to site visitors. An example can be seen in the screenshot from the Boston College Law Library Facebook site on the following page.

## Screen 8: Boston College Law Library Events Section



The Events section was present on 20 of the sites reviewed, and absent from 65. These results can be seen in the table on the following page.

**Table 7: Events Section**

Number of Law Library Facebook Sites with Events Section	Number of Law Library Facebook Sites without Events Section	Percentage of Law Library Facebook Sites with Events Section	Percentage of Law Library Facebook Sites without Events Section
20	65	23.52%	76.47%

**Mobile Information and Features:**

A limited number of law library Facebook sites were found to offer information about mobile technology, such as the iPhone, and eBooks, such as the Kindle. Information about mobile technology was found on 6 of the sites reviewed, with 79 sites not having mobile specific information. These results can be seen in the table on the following page.

**Table 8: Mobile Information**

Number of Law Library Facebook Sites with Mobile Information	Number of Law Library Facebook Sites without Mobile Information	Percentage of law library Facebook sites with Mobile Information	Percentage of Law Library Facebook Sites without Mobile Information
6	79	7.05%	92.94%

An example of information about Apple iOS software can be found in the screenshot on the following page from the Wall section of the North Carolina Central Law Library Facebook site.

## Screen 9: North Carolina Central Wall Page: Entry on the Law Pod



An example of a law library Wall post about eBooks and the Kindle can be found in the screenshot on the following page from the University of Baltimore Law Library Facebook site.

## Screen 10: University of Baltimore Law Library Wall: Post on eBooks



### Custom Designed Facebook Sections:

In addition to the previously mentioned standard sections for Facebook sites, such as the Wall and Info sections, some law libraries have chosen to incorporate custom designed sections into their Facebook sites. These custom designed sections can be divided into two general categories: instant reference and library catalog searching.

### **Instant Reference:**

Instant reference applications allow for reference transactions between Facebook users and reference librarians. There were 3 sites which offered such features, while 82 did not, as can be seen in the following table.

**Table 9: Instant Reference Section**

Number of Law Library Facebook Sites with Instant Reference Section	Number of Law Library Facebook Sites without Instant Reference section	Percentage of law library Facebook sties with Instant Reference section	Percentage of Law Library Facebook Sites without Instant Reference section
3	82	3.52%	96.47%

An example of a live help application can be found in the screenshot on the following page from the Duke University Law Library Facebook site.

## Screen 11: Duke University Law Library- Live Help



### Library Catalog Searching:

For custom library catalog searching sections, there were two general categories: third-party databases (which were not operated by the law library) and applications which allowed for the searching of a library's internal catalog.

An example of the first category was an application which allowed for the searching of the WorldCat catalog. WorldCat is a service operated by the OCLC Online Computer Library Center, Inc., which offers search functionality for the collections of over 71,000 libraries in 112 countries (OCLC, *WorldCat Statistics*).



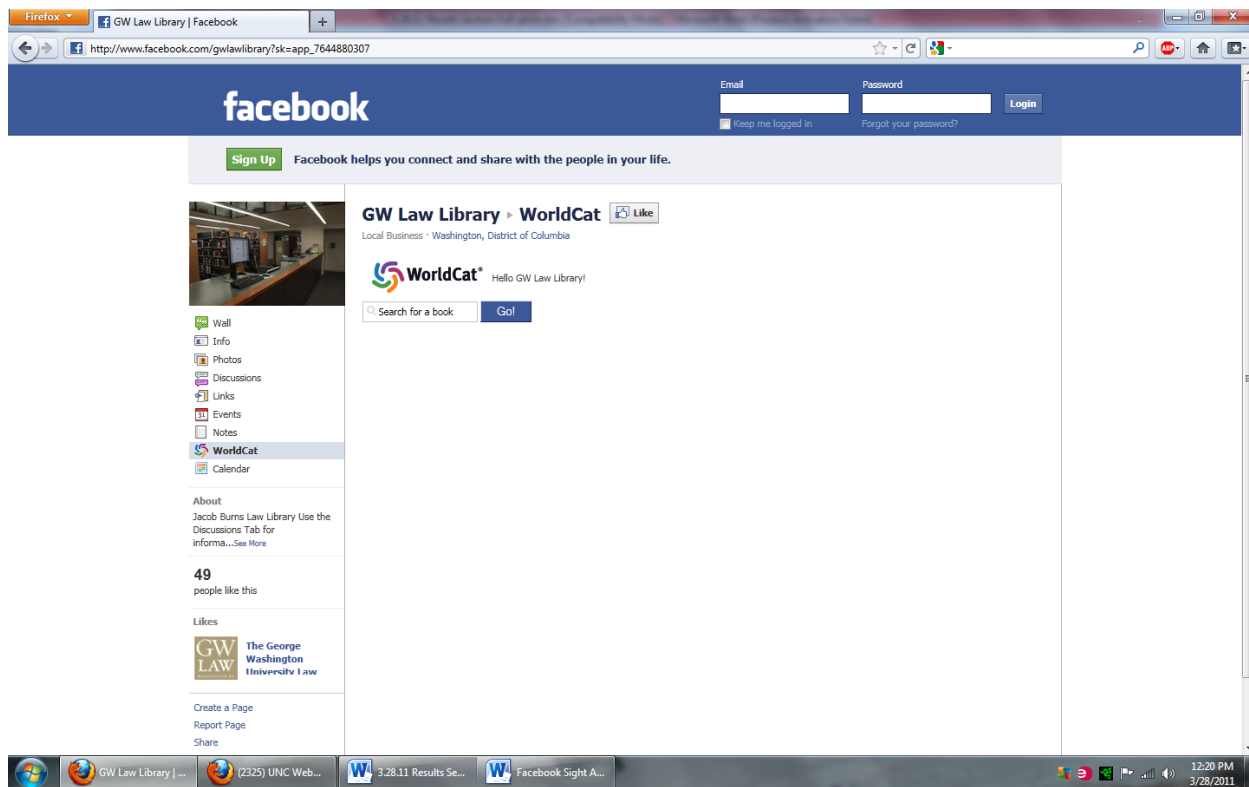
7 sites provided a custom WorldCat section, while 78 did not, as can be seen in the following table.

**Table 10: WorldCat Section**

Number of Law Library Facebook Sites with WorldCat Section	Number of Law Library Facebook Sites without WorldCat section	Percentage of law library sties with WorldCat section	Percentage of Law Library Facebook Sites without WorldCat section
7	78	8.23%	91.76%

An example of a WorldCat section can be found in the screenshot on the following page, which depicts the George Washington Law Library Facebook site.

## Screen 12: George Washington Law Library- WorldCat



In the second category of library catalog search sections, there were 7 sites which offered custom searching of the library's catalog from within the Facebook site, while 78 sites did not offer such a feature. These figures are depicted in the table on the following page.

**Table 11: Catalog Search Section**

Number of Law Library Facebook Sites with Catalog Search section	Number of Law Library Facebook Sites without Catalog Search section	Percentage of law library Facebook sties with Catalog Search section	Percentage of Law Library Facebook Sites without Catalog Search section
7	78	8.23%	91.76%

Typical search options included searching by keyword, author, title, subject, journal title, and reserve course name. An example of such a custom library catalog search section can be found in the screenshot on the following page from the Boston University Law Library Facebook site.

## Screen 13: Boston University Law Library- BU Catalog

The screenshot shows a Firefox browser window displaying the Facebook page for the Boston University Pappas Law Library. The page URL is [http://www.facebook.com/bulawlibrary/?sk=app\\_4949752878](http://www.facebook.com/bulawlibrary/?sk=app_4949752878). The Facebook header includes the logo, a 'Sign Up' button, and login fields for email and password. The page content features a cover photo of a library interior, a 'Like' button, and a 'Local Business' tag for Boston, Massachusetts. A left sidebar contains navigation links: Wall, Info, LiveChat, BU Catalog (selected), BU eJournals, Photos, and eResources. Below these are sections for 'About' (stating the library's commitment to growth), '361 people like this', and 'Likes' (featuring a 'Extend the MBTA's Hours!!' poster and a 'MEDA (Multi-service Eating Disorders)' logo). The main content area is titled 'Boston University Pappas Law Library > BU Catalog' and includes a search interface with radio buttons for 'Keyword', 'Author', 'Title', 'Subject', 'Journal Title', 'Reserves: Course Name', and 'Reserves: Professor'. A 'Search BU Catalog' button is at the bottom of the search section. The Windows taskbar at the bottom shows several open applications: Boston University..., (2325) UNC Web..., 3.28.11 Results Se..., and Facebook Sight A..., along with the system clock showing 12:42 PM on 3/28/2011.

## **Discussion:**

As indicated in the results section, recent years have seen a large growth in the number of law library Facebook sites offered by ABA institutions, increasing from fewer than 10 in 2007 to 85 as of March, 2011. What can account for this dramatic increase in the number of law library Facebook sites? It is likely a combination of multiple factors, but one factor is the recognition by law library administrators that a great number of law students were using Facebook. Behrens (2007) cites Jim Mills, the former director of the University of Buffalo Law Library as saying that approximately 80 to 90% of his law students were active users of Facebook. In addition, law library administrators were likely receptive to the idea that a law library should chose to offer a presence where the students are located, even if it is in a virtual space. Sarah Glassmeyer, a reference librarian who created the first law library Facebook site, noted, “Why is the law library in the law building? Because that’s where the law students are. So it just makes sense to me that we should try and get ourselves [into] other places that the students ‘hang out,’ even if that place happens to be a virtual environment like Facebook.” (Behrens, 2007).

In addition to possessing a significant law student presence, Facebook offers additional features and customization options which are unavailable in other social media sites such as Flickr. For a library considering implementing a social media site, the flexibility and customization offered by the use of Facebook Markup Language has been cited as a significant advantage over less customizable social media sites, such as Twitter (Tagtmeier, 2010).

As noted in the results, the past four years have seen significant growth in the number of ABA accredited institutions choosing to offer a law library Facebook site. Such a trend is likely to continue into the foreseeable future. At the time of this writing in April, 2011, an example of a recently opened law library Facebook site can be found in Stetson University's Law Library Facebook site, which was started on March 3, 2011.

In evaluating the average and median number of 'likes' associated with a law library Facebook site, at 62.79%, the average number of 'likes' as a percentage of the student population was relatively large. In addition, the median number of 'likes' as a percentage of the student population, at 54.65%, was also a substantial figure. Although not every person who 'likes' a law library Facebook site is necessarily a student, Xia (2009) found that close to one half of the number of people that chose to 'friend' the Facebook profile of the Herman B. Wells Library at Indiana University were actually students. However, these findings should be placed in context, as when the article was written in 2009, Facebook policies enforced a split between more limited 'group' pages, which could be started by anyone, including organizations, and 'personal profiles', which had more features but were limited only to individual use (Xia, 2009). However, these policies did not prevent the Herman B. Wells Library from starting a Facebook site as a 'personal profile' rather than as a 'group' (Xia, 2009). In 2011, the distinction between Facebook sites started between individuals and organizations is much less noticeable, as organization started pages are fully able to implement applications and customize their pages much more than what was permitted in the 'group' pages of 2009 (Facebook.com). The loosening of Facebook policies with respect to pages started by organizations may

also help account for the significantly larger number of law library Facebook sites that are present in 2011 when contrasted with the number present in 2007.

With regard to the number of ‘likes’ that a law library Facebook site has, two outliers are worthy of further discussion. The UCLA Law Library Facebook site was ‘liked’ by 519 people, a number significantly above the average number of ‘likes’ for the law library Facebook sites as a whole. The Stetson University Law Library Facebook site, by contrast, was ‘liked’ by only 14 people, a number very much below average. The following table illustrates the previous figures:

**Table 12: ‘Likes’ for Stetson and UCLA Law Library Facebook Sites**

Number of ‘likes’ for Stetson University Law Library Facebook Site	Number of ‘likes’ for UCLA Law Library Facebook Site	Average number of ‘likes’ for ABA Accredited Law Library Facebook Site
14	519	162.2471

Student enrollment numbers wise, the two colleges are similar. According to ABA data, the UCLA School of Law enrolled 1011 students, while the Stetson Law Library enrolled 1033 students (Law School Admission Council Statistics, 2010).

As a percentage of the student population, the number of ‘likes’ for the UCLA Law Library Facebook Site represents approximately 50.6% of the student population, while

the number of ‘likes’ for the Stetson University Law Library site represents approximately 1.35% of the student population. The following tables illustrate the previous figures:

**Table 13: UCLA and Stetson Law School Enrollment and Facebook Site ‘Likes’**

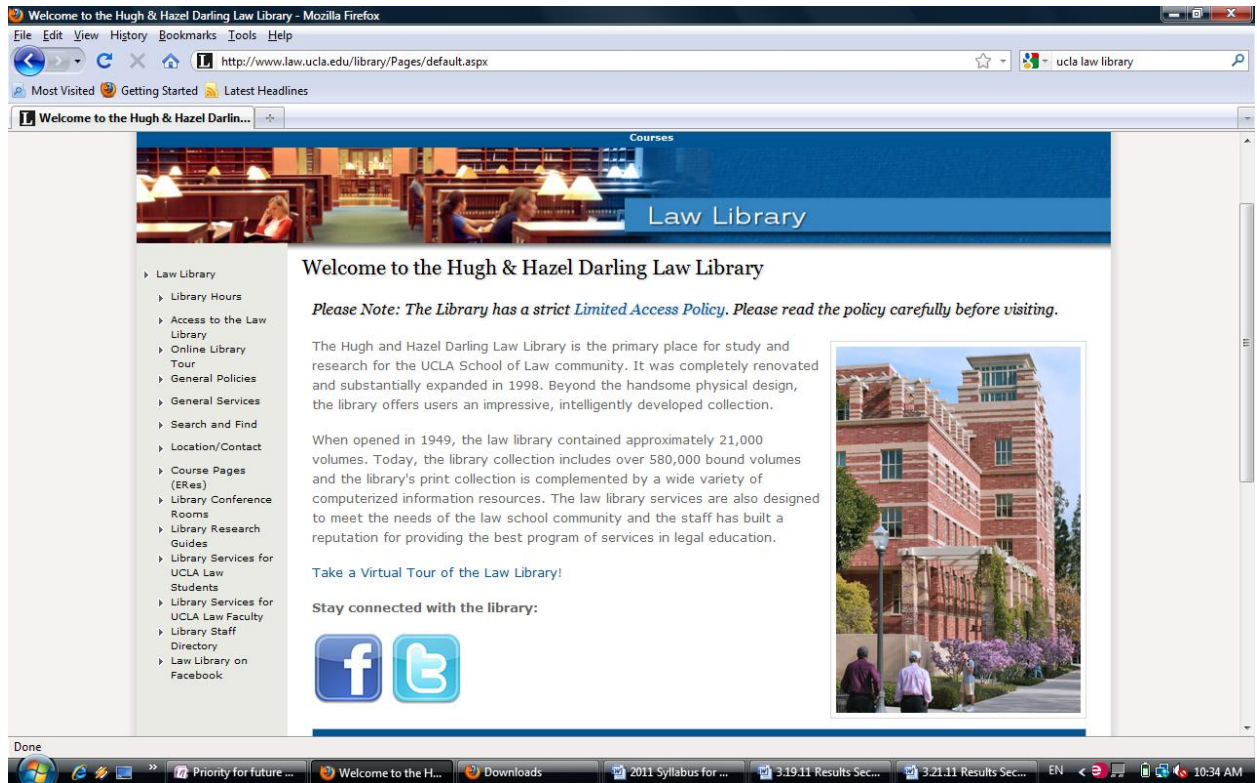
UCLA Law School: Number of Students	Stetson Law School: Number of Students	UCLA Law School: Number of ‘Likes’ as Percentage of Student Population	Stetson Law School: Number of ‘Likes’ as Percentage of Student Population
1011	1033	50.6%	1.35%

One noteworthy difference between the two universities is with regard to the prominence given to the law library Facebook site on the law library’s homepage.

The UCLA Law Library Facebook link is located near the center of the UCLA Law Library home page, with a 75 x 75 pixel image that is readily visible to a visitor. Bold printed text next to the image invites visitors to “Stay connected with the library”. This can be seen in the following screenshot:



## Screen 14: UCLA Law Library Homepage



The central location of the image and link and the use of bold text suggest the importance of the Facebook service to the law library. In addition, the UCLA Law Library has utilized their Twitter feed (@uclalawlibrary) to advertise new features of the Facebook site. One example of this can be found in a Twitter post from March 6, 2010, which references the introduction of a discussion board section on the Facebook site, as can be seen in the screenshot on the following page.

## Screen 15: UCLA Law Library Twitter



As of this writing in April 2011, the Stetson Law Library does not have a link to their law library Facebook page on the website. The only way to find the Stetson Law Library Facebook site is through the use of Facebook or web search engine searches. An example of these search terms is the use of the phrase “Stetson Law Library Facebook” in Google.

By not including a link to the Facebook page on their library website, the Stetson Law Library has made its Facebook page much more difficult to find. Unless an individual was specifically looking for the Stetson Law Library Facebook site, and was willing to utilize external resources outside of the law library’s website, it is likely that he or she would not find the Facebook site.

An additional factor contributing to the lack of ‘likes’ for the Stetson Law Library Facebook site relates to the relatively new nature of the site, when compared with the UCLA Law Library Facebook site. The UCLA Law Library Facebook site had content dating back to October, 2009, indicating that it was operational for nearly one and a half years, while the Stetson Law Library Facebook site had only been operational for approximately a month, at the time of this writing.

The number of ‘likes’ present on the two Facebook sites was tracked over a one month period from March 10, 2011 to April 10, 2011. The UCLA Law Library Facebook site gained 7 ‘likes’, while the Stetson Law Library Facebook site remained constant at 14 likes. These figures are illustrated in the table on the following page.

**Table 14: Number and Change of ‘Likes’: UCLA and Stetson Law Libraries**

Number of Likes: UCLA Law Library- 3/12/2011	Number of ‘Likes’: UCLA Law Library- 4/12/2011	Number of ‘Likes’: Stetson Law Library- 3/12/2011	Number of ‘Likes’: Stetson Law Library- 4/12/2011	Change in number of ‘Likes’: UCLA Law Library	Change in number of ‘Likes’: Stetson Law Library
512	519	14	14	+7	0

**Facebook Features Discussion:**

As mentioned in the results section, common features were found on many of the law library Facebook sites. These included the Wall, Info, Photos, Notes, Links, Discussions and Events Sections. Each of these will be briefly examined in turn.

**A) Wall:**

This section was present on all of the law library Facebook sites reviewed. As the default page that a visitor sees when visiting the Facebook site, it is not surprising that this is the

case. Among the Wall pages reviewed, the Nova Southeastern Law Library and the Syracuse Law Library pages are worthy of further discussion as examples of the design elements and features of a Wall page.

The Nova Southeastern Law Library Wall can be seen in the following screenshot.

### Screen 16: Nova Southeastern Wall



Two particular elements stand out, the first being the frequent updates to the page. At the time the screenshot was taken on April 20, 2011, there had been six updates to the Wall within the past week, averaging nearly one per day. Another element that stands out from the page is that in addition to the frequent updates, every single posting contains a link to another site. These links can be accessed by either clicking on the image, or on the URL.

A screenshot of a very differently designed Wall page can be seen in the image on the following page from the Syracuse Law Library Facebook site.

### Screen 17: Syracuse Law Library Facebook Wall



In contrast with the Nova Southeastern Law Library Wall, the frequency of updates is very poor, as the last update was of March 27, 2008. The lack of updates in the past three years indicates that the page is no longer being maintained. In addition to the lack of updates, the content that is present does not appear to be of use to a visitor who is interested in learning more about the Syracuse Law Library. Two of the postings were made by individuals that no longer have Facebook pages, and the bottom post makes a

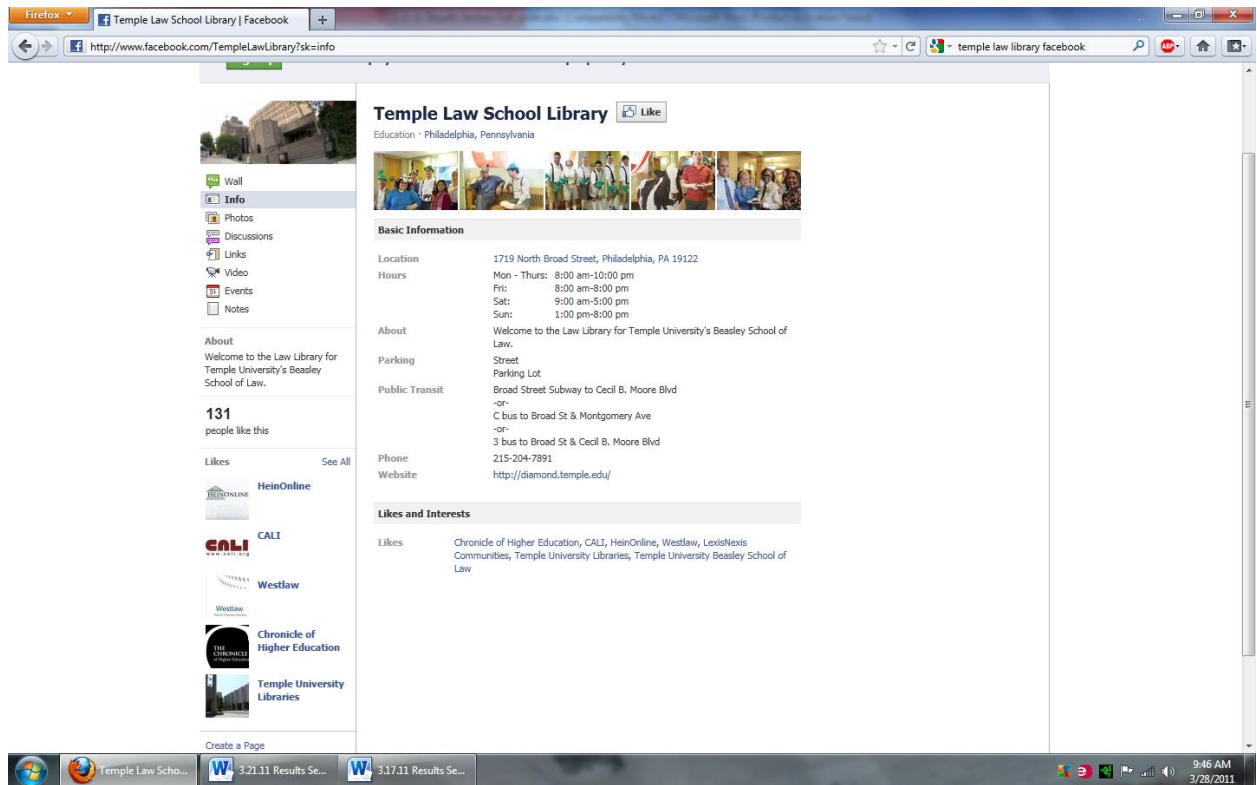
reference of allowing former acquaintances to join as members, which implies that the page is offered for current and former acquaintances rather than the general public.

Unlike the Nova Southeastern Wall postings, none of the posts offer links for a visitor to follow.

### **B) Info:**

This was another section that was present in all of the reviewed Law Library Facebook sites. Like the Wall, it is a standard feature of a Facebook site, and it was not surprising to see it present on all of the sites reviewed. The Temple Law School Library offers an example of one of the more full featured Info pages, as can be seen in the screenshot on the following page.

## Screen 18: Temple Law School Library Info



In addition to offering information about the location and hours, details about parking and public transit are also provided. For a user who is seeking information about visiting the law library, this Info page provides all of the facts they are likely to request in a concise format.

In contrast with the full featured information of the Temple Law School Library page, an example of a simpler Info page can be found on the Texas Tech University School of Law Library Facebook site, as can be seen in the screenshot on the following page.



## Screen 19: Texas Tech University School of Law Library Info



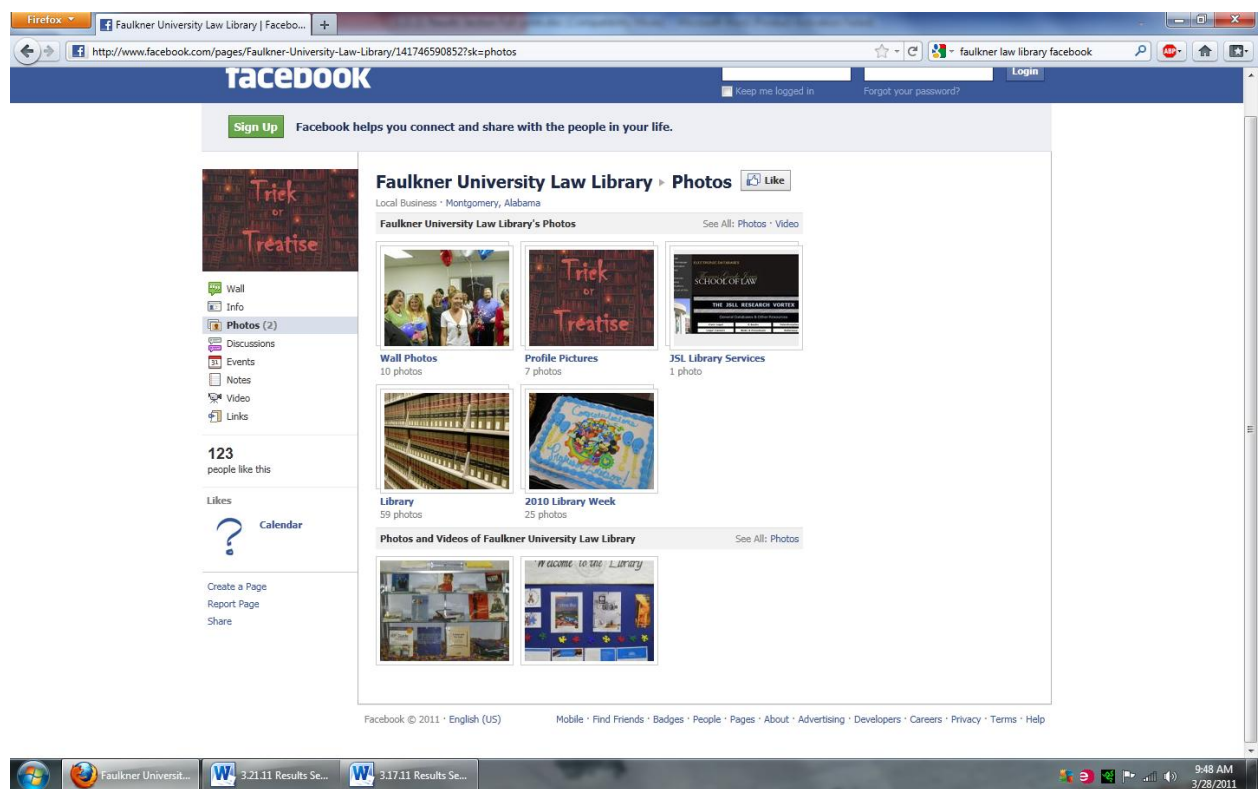
The Texas Tech University site lacks the information on transit that was provided in the Temple Law School Library site, but does offer an additional paragraph entitled 'General Information' which provides an introduction to the library's goals and purposes. However, the 'General Information' paragraph is both longer in word count and length than the information which is most likely to be requested by someone planning to visit the law library, such as the hours or the phone number. The 'General Information' paragraph's location in the center of the Info page is somewhat questionable, as it separates the phone and website information from the location and hours.

### C) Photos

The Photos section was present in 75 of the sites reviewed, but was absent from 10.

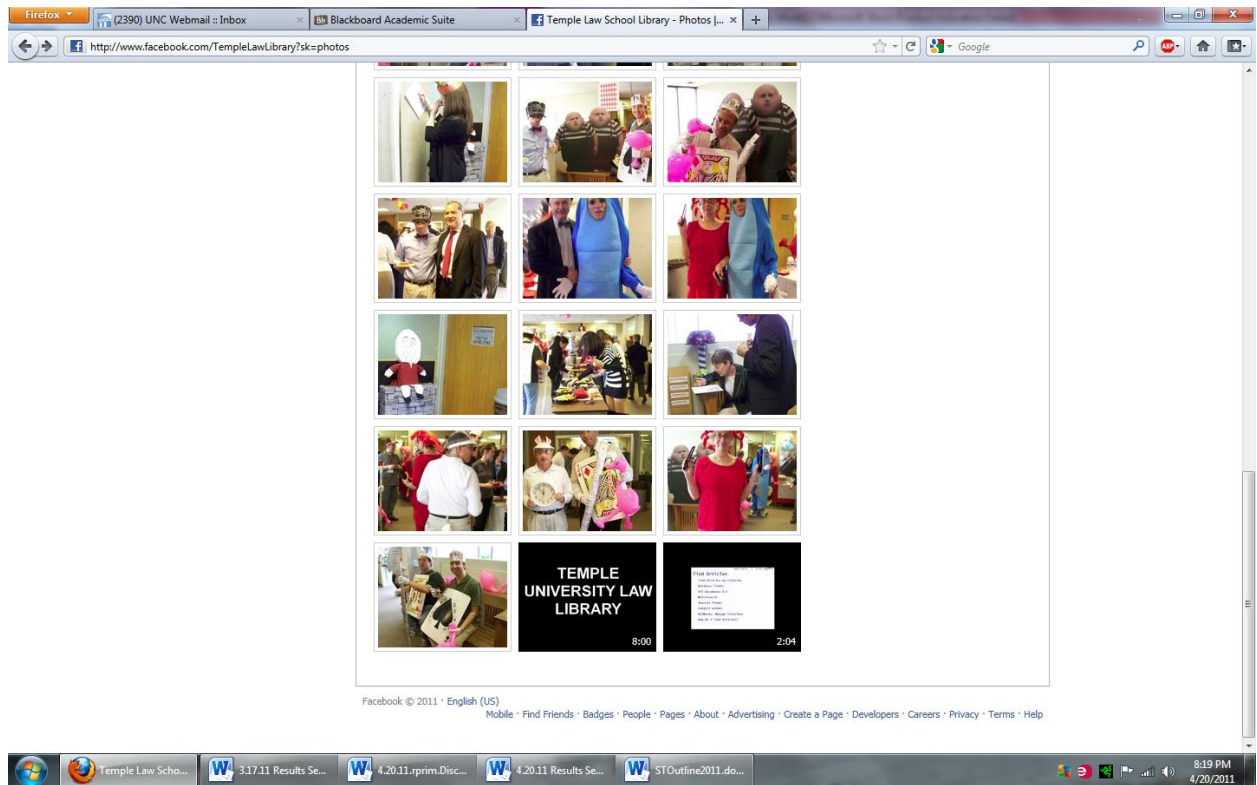
Being present in approximately 88% of the sites reviewed indicates that the section was a very common feature in the sites reviewed. Most of the photo sections were used to only display photographs, as can be seen in the following screenshot from the Faulkner University Law Library.

**Screen 20: Faulkner University Law Library Photos**



Although the Photos section was typically dedicated to still photography only, occasionally video would also be present, as can be seen in the screenshot on the following page from Temple University's Law Library Photos section.

## Screen 21: Temple Law School Library Photos



However, with the number of photos displayed on the Temple Law School Library Photos section, it would likely be difficult for a visitor to recognize that video content was present in the Photos section, unless he or she took the initiative to scroll to the bottom of the screen.

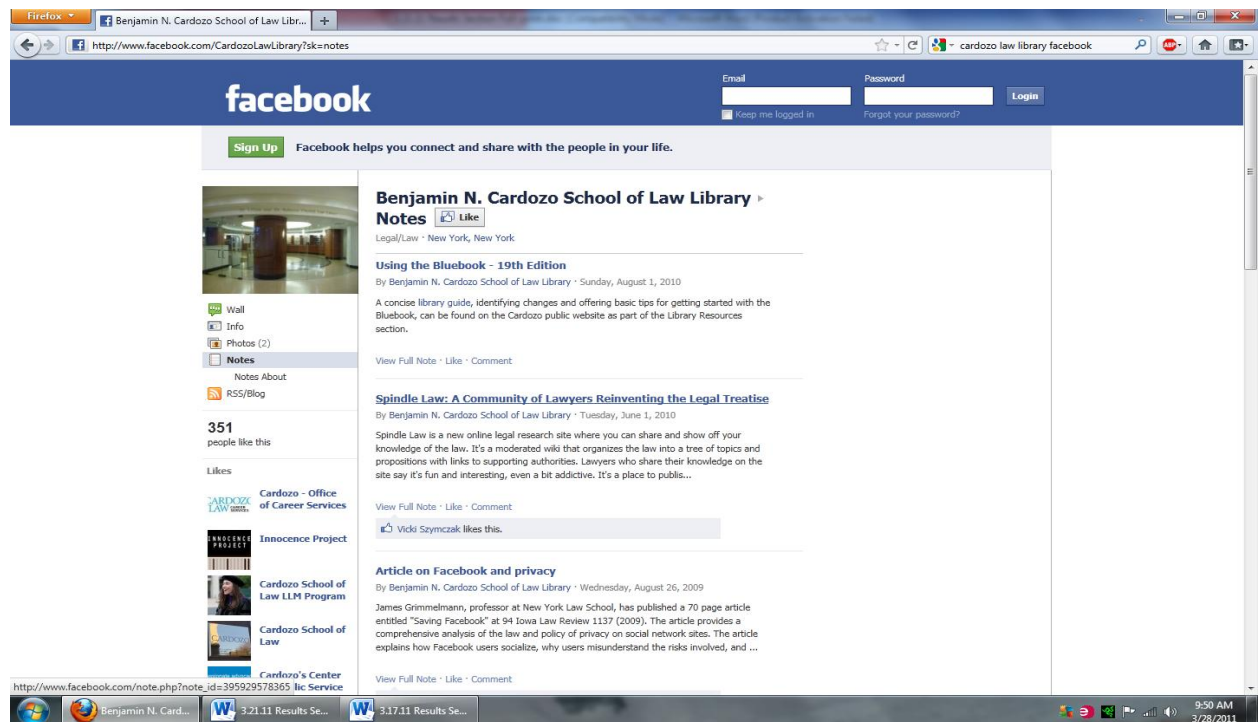
### D) Notes

The Notes section was present on 29 of the law library Facebook sites reviewed, and absent from 56. Being present in approximately 34% of the sites reviewed indicates that the feature is not uncommon to find on the law library Facebook sites, but is absent in the majority of the sites. One possible reason for the absence of the Notes section in many of

the sites is that many functions of the Notes section, such as individual posts, could be offered through other areas of the site, such as the Wall or a Discussion Board section.

An example of the Notes section can be seen in the following image from the Benjamin N Cardozo School of Law Library Facebook Site.

## Screen 22: Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law Library Notes



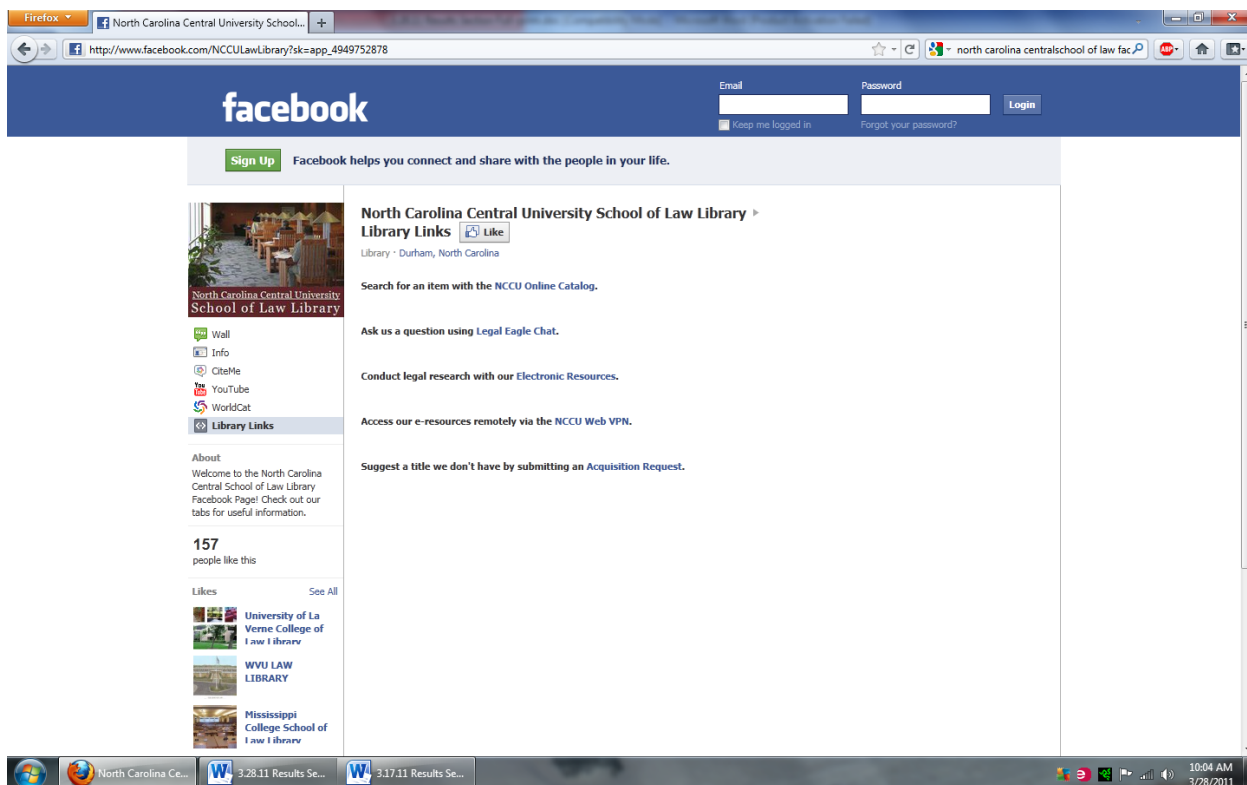
Here the Notes section is being used to provide a post relating to using the Bluebook, a legal citation guide, in addition to a link to an article about Facebook and privacy. For the sites that did offer Notes sections, the time between updates was typically much larger when compared with the frequent updates of the Wall. This can be seen in the image of

the Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law Library's Notes page, as there is nearly a one year gap between the first and the third posting.

### E) Links Section:

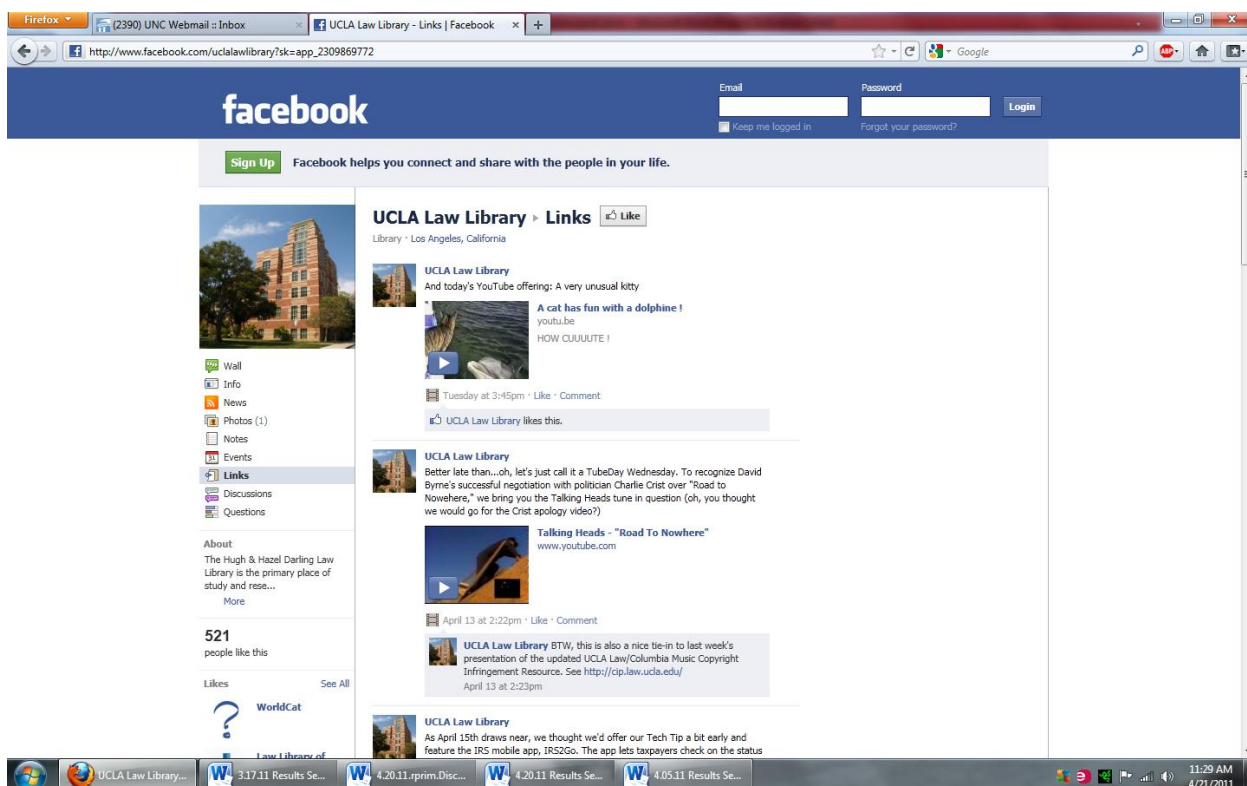
The Links section was present in 23 of the sites reviewed, and was absent from 62. Being present in approximately 27% of the sites reviewed, the number of Links sections was slightly less than the number of Notes sections. An example of a Links section can be seen in the following screenshot from the North Carolina Central School of Law Library Facebook site.

#### Screen 23: North Carolina Central University School of Law Library Links



This is an example of a links page which was custom designed to include a series of links selected by the authors of the site. Resources linked to include the online catalog, and a form to submit a request for a title that the library does not currently possess. An alternative approach to designing a Links page can be seen in the screenshot on the following page from the UCLA Law Library Facebook site.

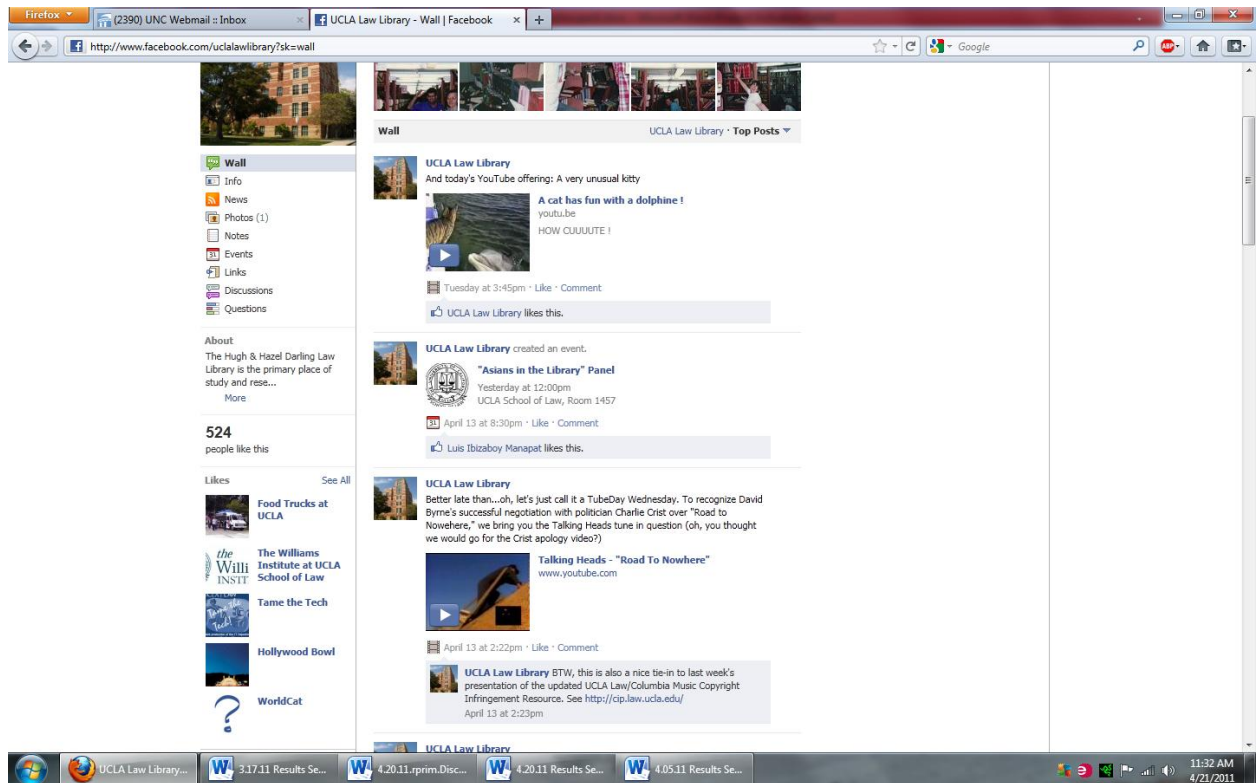
### Screen 24: UCLA Law Library Links



Here, the UCLA Law Library is merely using the Links page as an alternative location for displaying posts on the Wall which had links. This can be seen in the screenshot on the following page of the UCLA Law Library Wall.



## Screen 25: UCLA Law Library Wall



As can be seen in the previous screenshot of the Links section, the content related to the cat video and the talking heads video is identical on both the Wall and the Links section.

In comparison with the approach taken by the NC Central Law Library, a visitor may find the cloning of content from the Wall to be less useful, as the Links section is only being used for content which is already present elsewhere on the site.

## F) Discussions Section:

The Discussions section was present in 33 of the sites reviewed, and absent from 55. The Discussions section was present in approximately 35.29% of the sites reviewed, making it slightly more common than the Links section which was present in approximately 27% of the sites reviewed. Like the Notes section, the Discussions section typically hosted content that could also have been offered through other sections, such as the Wall. In addition, it was common to find that the Discussions section was very infrequently updated, as can be seen in the following image from the Pace Law Library Facebook site.

**Screen 26: Pace Law Library Discussions**



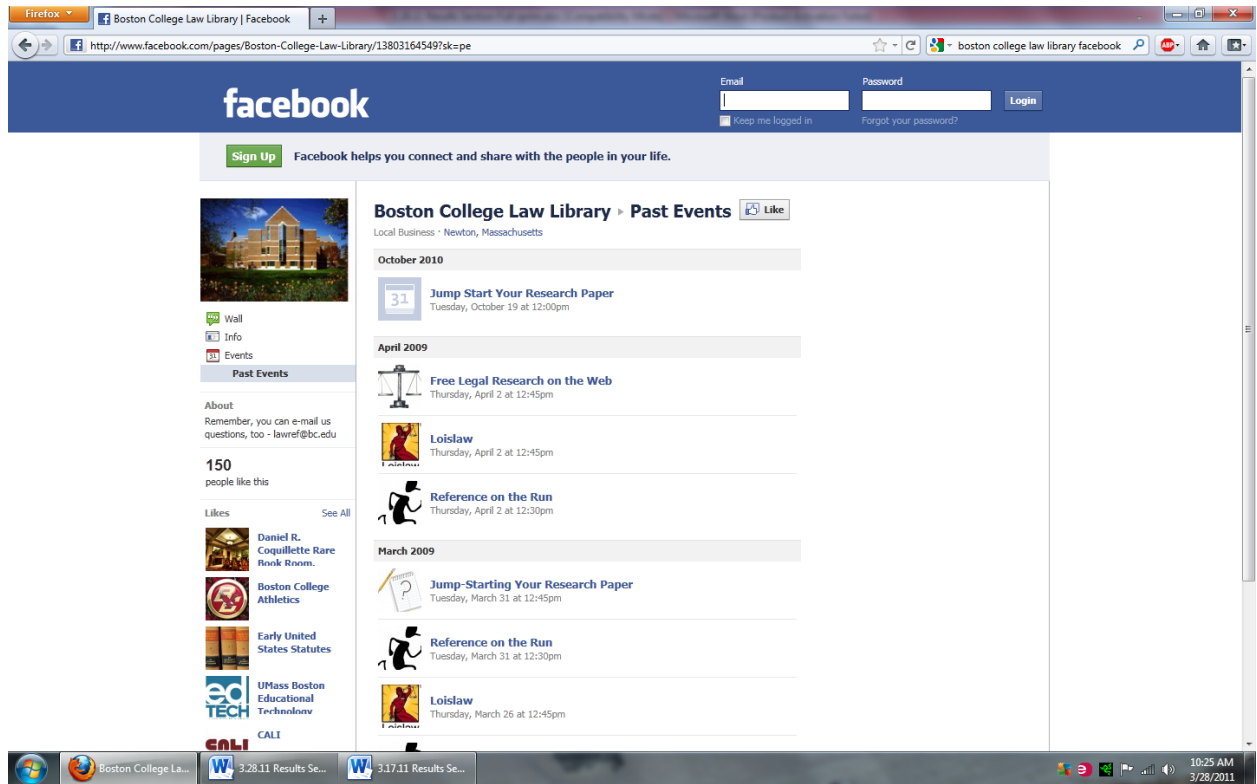


In the example of the Pace Law Library given above, two of the three topics received no replies in over a year, with the exception of the topic on Wolfram Alpha which received a single reply. Design location wise, the Discussions section in the Pace Law Library is placed below the Wall, Info, and Photos section. None of the sites reviewed that had a Discussions section contained significant numbers of posts or activity. A possible reason for this is, as previously mentioned; the functions that can be performed in a Discussions section can be made available elsewhere on the site, such as the Wall, where visitor traffic is more likely to notice a posting than in a separate dedicated section.

#### **G) Events Section:**

The events section was present in 20 of the sites reviewed, and absent from 65. Approximately 23.5% of the sites reviewed offered an Events section. Like the Discussion Board section, the Events section was unused or inactive on many of the pages reviewed. An example of an Events section can be seen in the screenshot on the following page from the Boston College Law Library.

## Screen 27: Boston College Law Library



An example of the long time between updates can be seen in the image, with the “Jump Start Your Research Paper” being posted in October 2010, and the preceding event being posted in April, 2009.

It is possible that the reluctance to make use of the Events section on the sites which offered it relates to the ability of the Wall page to perform similar functionality, and the possibility that if an event was only displayed on the Events section it may not be seen by a casual visitor.

### Mobile Features Discussion:

A limited number of law library Facebook sites were found to offer information about mobile technology, such as the iPhone, and eBooks, such as the Kindle. Information about mobile technology was found on 6 of the sites reviewed, or approximately 7.05%, indicating that such information was a relatively unusual offering. An example of information about Apple iOS software can be found in the following screenshot from the Wall section of the North Carolina Central Law Library Facebook site.

**Screen 28: The Law Pod- NC Central Wall Entry**



In this screenshot, a post by the NC Central Law Library provides a brief summary of The Law Pod, a developer of law related applications for the Apple iOS platform. For the sites that did offer information about mobile technology, the majority of the information did relate to the Apple iOS platform, with more limited information being made available for other platforms, such as the Android mobile operating system. One possible reason for this lack of information may relate to the absence of certain legal applications on the Android platform. For example, LexisNexis, a major provider of legal information, does not offer Android compatible versions of their mobile software applications, but does offer iOS compatible versions.

With regard to information about eBooks, the information that was present was relatively inclusive, covering Kindles, Nooks, and iPads. An example of a typical Facebook post about eBooks can be seen in the screenshot on the following page from the University of Baltimore Law Library.

## Screen 29: University of Baltimore Law Library Wall



The post in the screenshot is an expanded version of the original Wall post from February 9, 2011. The post provides a link to the Stanford Law Review, which is now available in Kindle, Nook and iPad editions.

### Custom Features Discussion:

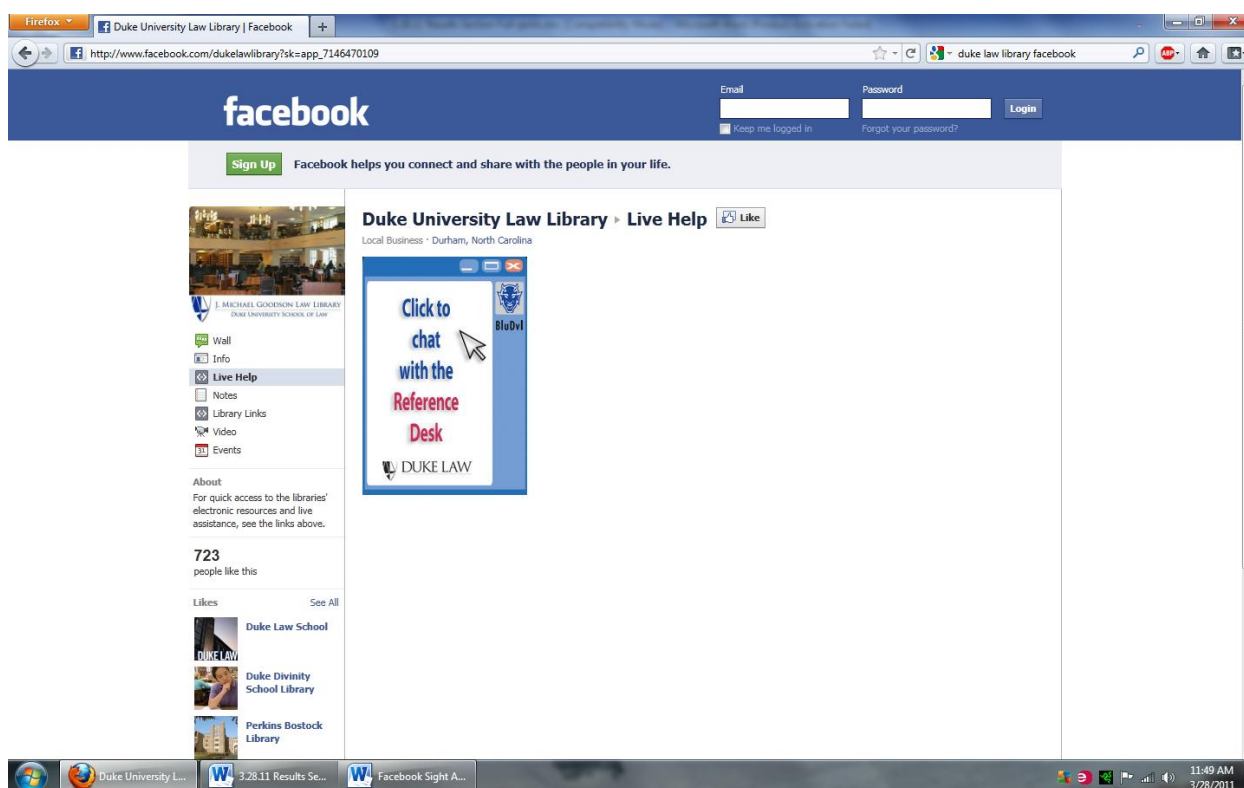
In addition to the previously mentioned standard sections for Facebook sites, some law libraries have chosen to incorporate custom designed sections into their Facebook sites.

These custom designed sections can be divided into two general categories: instant reference and library catalog searching.

### Instant Reference:

This was present in 3 of the sites reviewed, or approximately 3.52%, making it a very uncommon feature. An example of an instant reference application can be seen in the following screenshot from the Duke University Law Library Facebook site.

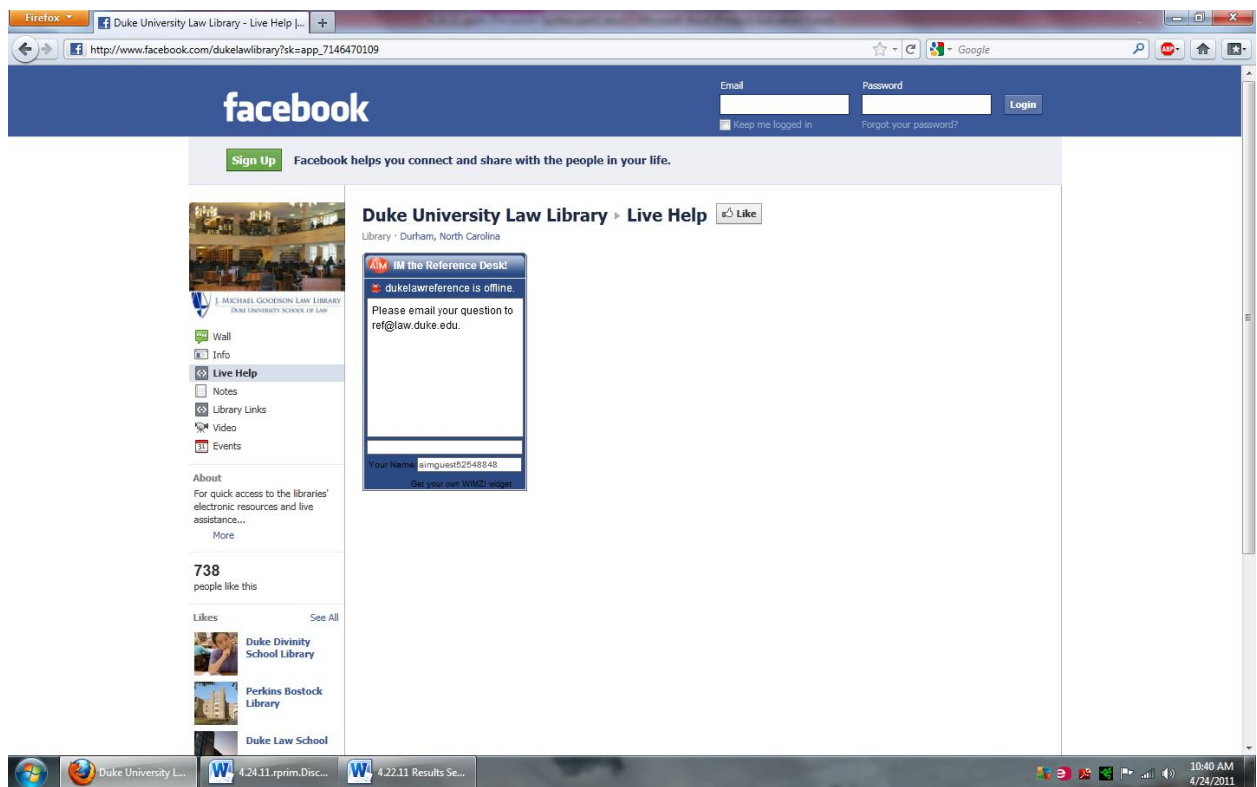
**Screen 30: Duke University Law Library Live Help**



The Duke Live Help application offers a Macromedia Flash powered connection to the America Online Instant Messenger system. If the Duke Reference Desk is not signed into the instant messenger system, a message is displayed which requests users to email

their questions to [ref@law.duke.edu](mailto:ref@law.duke.edu), as can be seen in the screenshot on the following page.

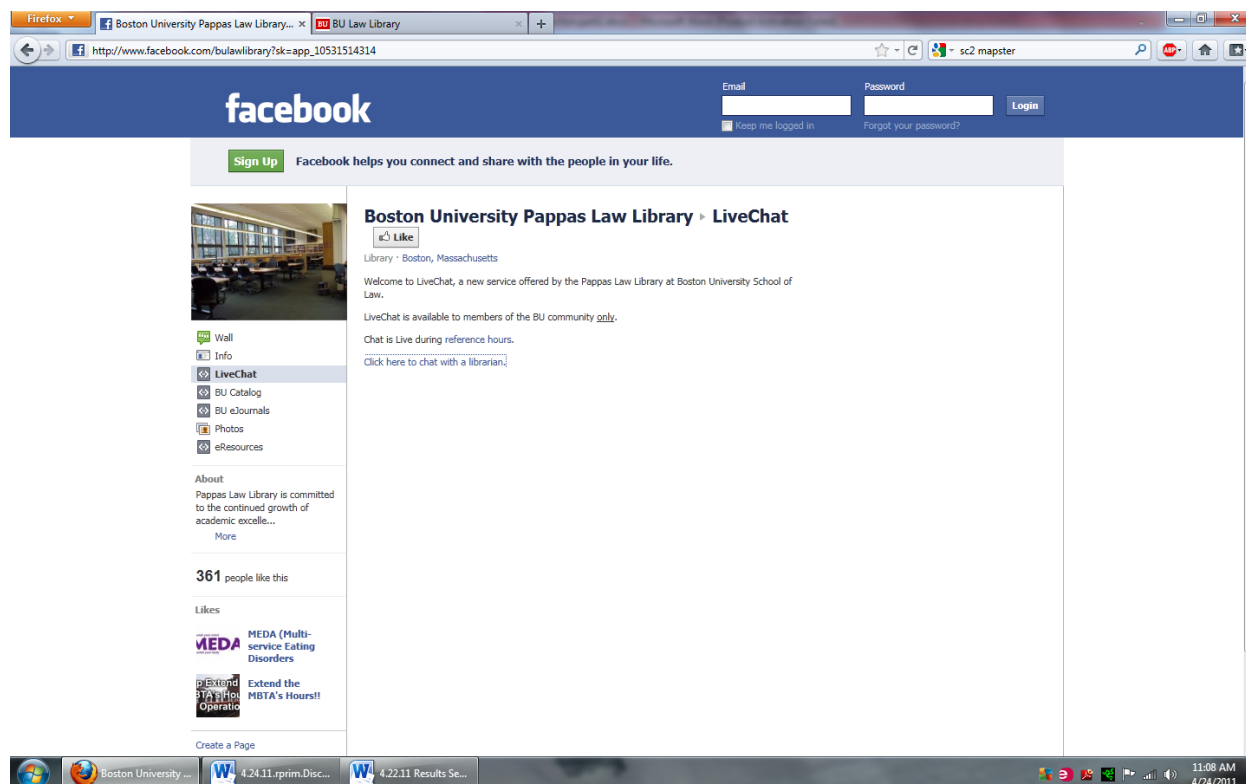
### Screen 31: Duke University Live Help Offline



The instant messenger system offers the functionality of changing a username, or accepting a default username. In this screenshot, the default username was `aimguest52548848`. This is a somewhat unwieldy username for visitor to use, but the name can easily be changed by replacement.

An example of a more limited version of an Instant Reference section can be seen in the following screenshot from the Boston University Law Library Facebook Site.

### Screen 32: Boston University Law Library LiveChat

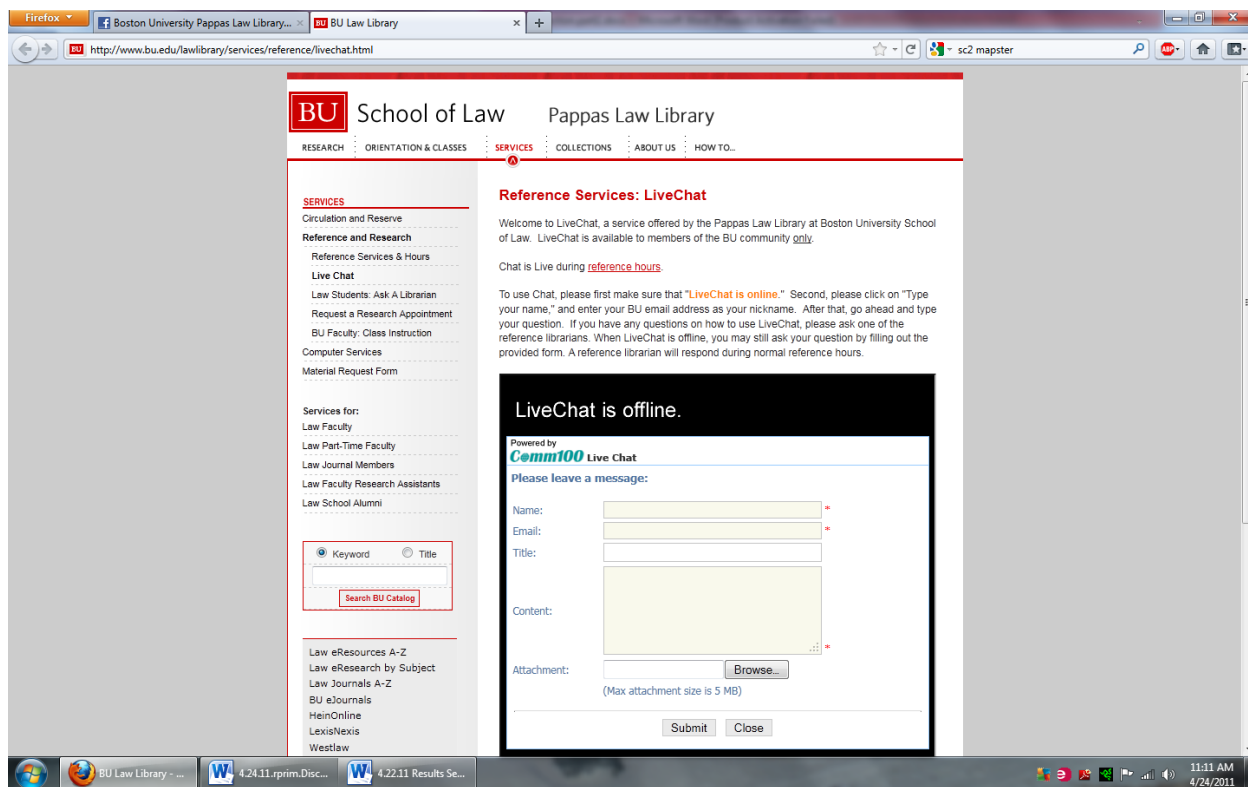


In contrast with the Duke Live Help system, the Boston University LiveChat cannot be accessed directly through the Facebook site. Instead, a user must click a link on the Facebook site which is labeled, 'Click here to chat with a librarian' which will redirect the user to the Boston University's primary website where the LiveChat is located. In addition, a disclaimer explicitly restricts the LiveChat system to members of the Boston University community only, while the Duke Live Help system has no such disclaimer. A



screenshot of the Boston University LiveChat interface can be seen in the following image.

### Screen 33: Boston University LiveChat



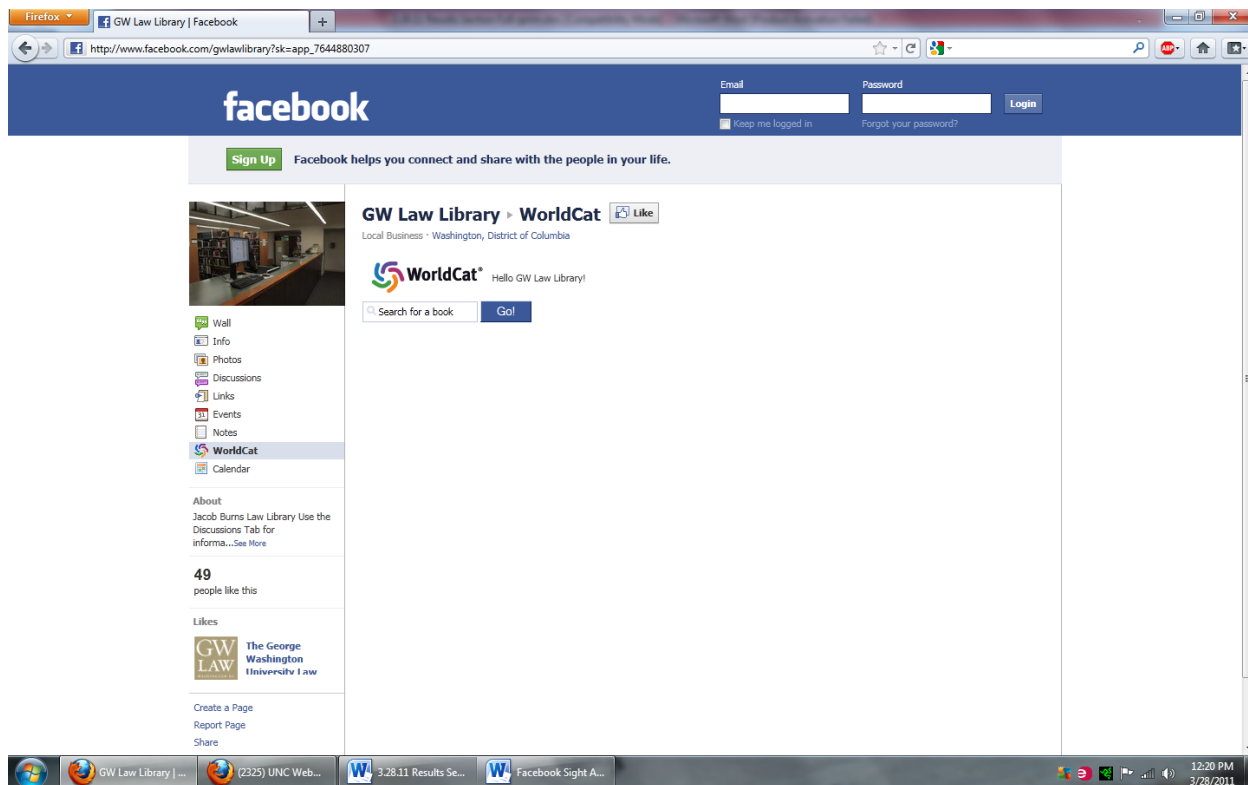
Unlike the Duke Live Help, which requested a visitor to email the reference desk while providing no built-in means to do so, this LiveChat system provides functionality which permits the sending of a message to the reference desk when the LiveChat is offline. In addition to a basic text message an attachment of up to 5 MB in size is also permitted to be sent.

**Library Catalog Searching:**

For the law library Facebook sites which offered catalog searching functionality through the Facebook site, two general categories of search functionality existed: third-party databases (which were not operated by the law library) and applications that allowed for the searching of a library's internal catalog.

Of the third party databases, WorldCat was the most numerous and was present in 7, or approximately 8.23% of the sites reviewed. An example of a WorldCat Facebook section can be seen in the screenshot of the following page from the George Washington Law Library.

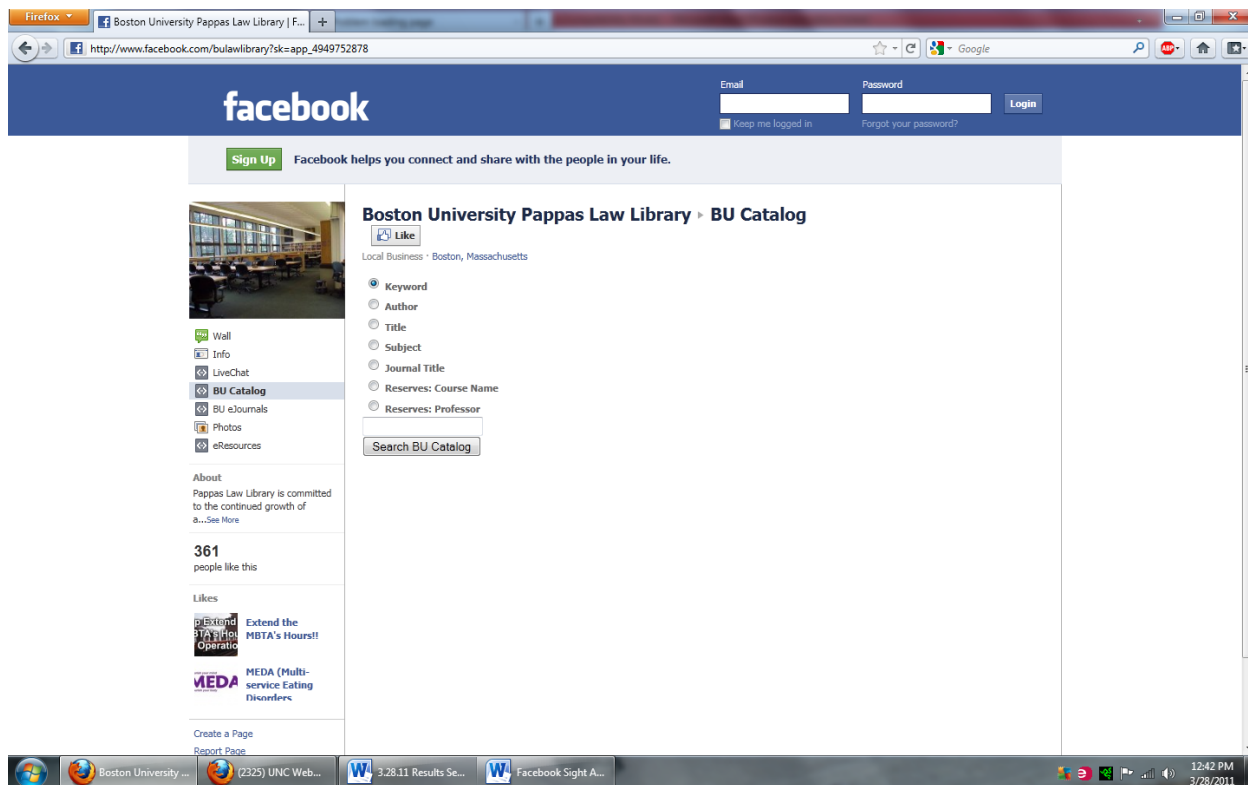
### Screen 34: GW Law Library Worldcat



A WorldCat search app such as the one displayed on the previous page allows for the searching of the WorldCat catalog directly from within the Facebook site. Although simple and easy to use, the application asks users to ‘Search for a Book’ but provides no further guidance about input methods or search fields, which may cause frustration for more advanced users who are used to greater control over the search process.

In addition to third party database search applications, such as WorldCat, 7 libraries, or 8.23% of the sites reviewed, also offered custom designed applications which allowed for searching of the library’s catalog from within the Facebook site. An example can be seen in the following image from the Boston University Law Library Facebook site.

## Screen 35: Boston University Law Library Catalog Application



This application allows for the searching of the BU catalog from within the Facebook sites. Options include keyword, author, title, subject, journal title and two related to course reserves. In comparison with the WorldCat search application, the BU one is more complex, but offers a much finer degree of control over the search results. A typical user is likely to find the Boston University search application more useful in practice due to the limitation of the search results to the library's catalog and the significantly increased level of control over the search results.

**Recommendations:**

For a law library wishing to implement or improve a Facebook site, several recommendations can be drawn from the results. First, in deciding what basic Facebook sections to include on the site, it is recommended that the three most common sections, the Wall, the Info section and the Photos section all be included. As these are the sections which users are most likely to visit, proper care should go into these sections to make sure that they are updated regularly and often. A visitor who notices that the last update to a Wall section is several months old is likely to think that the page is abandoned, and is unlikely to visit the rest of the Facebook site. With regard to the less common sections, such as the Discussions section, it is recommended that any decision to implement them be carefully considered. Because of redundancy with other sections of the site, such as the Wall, and a possible lack of interest for visitors to delve deeply into a Facebook site, all too often such sections appeared to lie unused and abandoned. In addition, using one of these sections to automatically clone selected material from the Wall, as in the case of a number of Links sections, does not seem to be very useful from a visitor's perspective. If a visitor specifically wishes to visit a Links section of a Facebook site, it is likely that he or she is looking for a selection of links which were chosen by the library, such as is the case on the N.C. Central Law Library Facebook site, rather than looking for an alternate location to find copies of Wall postings which had links in them, as is the case on the UCLA Law Library's Facebook site.

If law libraries want students to be able to easily access and make use of a Facebook site offered by the library, the actions taken by the UCLA Law Library are recommended.

Offering a link in a prominent position on the law library's homepage helps to make the existence of the Facebook site readily apparent to visitors. In addition, the use of other social media services, such as Twitter, to advertise new features of the Facebook site both helps to spread word about the existence of the Facebook site and emphasizes the importance that the library places on making such a resource available to the students. By contrast, the decision to not include a link on the law library homepage by the Stetson Law Library is an action that is not recommended. The lack of such a link makes it much more difficult for students to access the Facebook site, and thereby potentially limits the effectiveness of offering such a service to the students.

In deciding between relying on the standard sections of a Facebook site and choosing to incorporate custom sections, a recommendation depends on what the law library hopes to accomplish with offering the Facebook site to the public. If the site is only to be used for posting events and news related items, it is likely that all of these functions could be accomplished through the use of the Wall alone. If a law library is more ambitious and wishes to have the Facebook site serve as a full featured and rich platform, it is recommended that custom sections be used. In particular, functions such as catalog searching cannot be implemented without the use of custom sections. With regard to instant reference, there is an additional possible alternative besides using an instant reference application. Because Facebook supports a built in instant messenger client, if a librarian was logged in to the Facebook site, he or she could conceivably communicate with friends through the built in messenger system. The drawback to this method is that members of the general public who are not signed in and friends of the law library would

not be able to use it, but it is an additional alternative to consider besides the use of custom instant messenger applications.

It was somewhat disappointing for me to find that the information about mobile technology was present on so few of the Facebook sites, particularly in light of the effort many law libraries have put into designing mobile sites. Although a significant majority of the law library sites listed a website address in the Info section, this section would also be a good location to include information about any mobile features offered by a law library. As companies such as LexisNexis have increasingly turned to developing new and improved legal related mobile applications, law libraries could help to raise awareness of such developments through postings on the Wall.

### **Conclusion:**

This study has found that over the past few years the number of ABA accredited law libraries offering Facebook sites has seen very significant growth, from less than 10 in 2007 to 85 as of this writing. On average, law library Facebook sites have a number of 'likes' which is equal to a sizable portion of the school's student population, which indicates the existence of interest in the site. However, not every law library Facebook site has seen success, as some, such as the Syracuse Law Library, lie seeming abandoned. Others, such as the Stetson Law Library, have seen little to no user growth over an extended period. But for the sites which have not seen success, common factors have been present, such as a lack of updates for extended periods or a lack of advertising and

promotion. These are areas in which law libraries are likely to have significant degree of control, and with an expenditure of time and effort can likely improve. Areas for possible future research include the use of law library Facebook sites from a student's perspective and investigations of law library Facebook sites which are not associated with academic institutions, such as court-operated law library Facebook sites.



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**Appendix A:****Facebook Information: Template A:**

URL:

Dedicated Sections:

Sections not present:

Number of friends:

Recent posts to Wall:

Info Section:

Events Section:

Boxes Section:

Books Section:

Photos Section:

Notes Section:

Links Section:

**Instrument Discussion:**

The first category in the template, “URL”, refers to the web address of a law library’s Facebook page.

The second category in the template, “Dedicated Sections”, refers to the tabbed sections which are present on the law library Facebook page.

Wall: This section contains what can be thought of as the “home page” for a Facebook site. The most recent posts to a Facebook page will generally show up on the wall. Users of the Facebook page are able to comment on these postings and can also choose to “like” a post.

Info: This section contains information about the law library. Sample items typically include: location, hours, and contact information.

Events: This section contains information about future and past events offered by the law library.

Books: This section contains information about books recommended or liked by the law librarians or information about books recently added to the collection.

Boxes: This is a section in which data from a variety of different sources is aggregated on a single page. This can include content from other sections of the Facebook page, or

content pulled from a non-Facebook website or a Really Simple Syndication (RSS) news feed.

Photos: This section includes photographs which are posted by the law librarians.

Notes: Like the boxes section, this is a section that can also aggregate data from a variety of different sources. Another use of a notes section is to function as a discussion board, by offering formal questions for users to answer.

Links: This section generally includes links of interest which have been selected by the law librarians.

The third category in the template, “Sections not present”, refers to the previously mentioned sections which are not present on the Facebook page.

In these two categories, for each of the Facebook pages, I recorded which of these common categories was present, and which were absent. If custom tabbed sections were available, or if less common categories were present, I also took note of this. I included these two categories on the template to assist with answering the third and fifth research questions, by recording what type of features were present on a law library’s Facebook page.

The fourth category in the template, “Number of friends”, refers to the number of people that have chosen to “like” a particular law library’s Facebook page. I included this category in order to assist with answering the second research question, as the category would help me to understand how popular a law library’s Facebook page was.

The fifth category in the template, “Recent posts to Wall”, refers to the most recent posts to a law library’s Facebook page in the past month, if available. I took note of what the recent posts to the Wall were in order to assist with answering the third, fourth, and fifth research questions.

In the sixth through twelfth categories of the template, I recorded further information about the content that was present on the Facebook site.



**Appendix B:****Advanced Facebook Site Features: Template B:**

Custom Designed Sections:

Mobile Information:

Live Reference:

**Instrument Discussion:**

The first category in the template, “Custom Designed Sections” is a category for recording information on a law library’s Facebook page sections which are unique to a particular law library’s Facebook page. Sections which did not fall under a category included in Template A but were present on the Facebook site would be included in this category. A similar recording process to that used in Template A was used to include relevant information from these additional sections. This category assisted with answering the third, fourth, and fifth research questions.

The second category in the template, “Mobile Information” refers to whether a law library Facebook page includes specific information or features dedicated to mobile devices. This category assisted with answering the fourth research question.

The third category in the template, “Live Reference” refers to whether a law library Facebook page includes features which would permit live communication with law library staff members from within a Facebook page. An example of such a feature is instant-messenger based chat reference. This category assisted with answering the third research question.